



U.S. Department of State FY 2001 Country Commercial Guide: Cameroon

The Country Commercial Guide for Cameroon was prepared by U.S. Embassy Yaounde and released by the Bureau of Economic and Business in July 2000 for Fiscal Year 2001.

International Copyright, U.S. & Foreign Commercial Service and the U.S. Department of State, 2000. All rights reserved outside the United States.

- I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
- II. ECONOMIC TRENDS AND OUTLOOK
 - A) Major Trends and Outlook
 - B) Principal Growth Sectors
 - C) Government Role in the Economy
 - D) Balance of Payments Situation
 - E) Infrastructure
- III. POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT
 - A) Nature of Political Relationship with the United States
 - B) Major Political Issues Affecting Business Climate
 - C) Brief Synopsis of Political System, Schedule for
 - D) Elections and Orientation of Major Political Parties
- IV. MARKETING U.S. PRODUCTS AND SERVICES
 - A) Distribution and Sales Channels
 - B) Information on Typical Product Pricing Structures
 - C) Use of Agents and Distributors; Finding a Partner
 - D) Franchising
 - E) Direct Marketing
 - F) Joint Ventures/Licensing
 - G) Steps to Establishing an Office

- H) Selling Factors/Techniques
- I) Advertising and Trade Promotion
- J) Pricing Product
- K) Sales Service/Customer Support
- L) Selling to the Government
- M) Protecting Your Product from IPR Infringement
- N) Need for a Local Attorney
- O) Performing Due Diligence/Checking Bona Fides of
- P) Banks/Agents/Customers

V. LEADING SECTORS FOR U.S. EXPORTS AND INVESTMENT

- A) Best Prospects for Non-Agricultural Goods and Services
- B) Best Prospects for Agricultural Products
- C) Significant Investment Opportunities

VI. TRADE REGULATIONS AND STANDARDS

- A) Trade Barriers, Including Tariff and Non-Tariff Barriers
- B) Customs Regulations
- C) Tariff Rates
- D) Import Taxes Including Value Added
- E) Taxes, Purchase Taxes, Uplifts and
- F) Surcharges, and Provincial Taxes
- G) Import License Requirements
- H) Temporary Goods Entry Requirements
- I) Special Import/Export Requirements and
- J) Certifications
- K) Labeling Requirements
- L) Prohibited Imports
- M) Warranty and Non-Warranty Repairs
- N) Export Controls
- O) Standards
- P) Free Trade Zones/Warehouses
- Q) Membership in Free Trade Arrangements
- R) Customs Contact Information

VII. INVESTMENT CLIMATE

- A) Openness to Foreign Investment
- B) Right to Private Ownership and Establishment
- C) Protection of Property Rights
- D) Adequacy of Laws and Regulation

- E) Governing Commercial Transactions
- F) Foreign Trade Zones/Free Ports
- G) Major Taxation Issues Affecting U.S. Business
- H) Performance Requirements/Incentives
- I) Transparency of the Regulatory System
- J) Corruption
- K) Labor
- L) Efficiency of Capital Markets and Portfolio Investment
- M) Conversion and Transfer Policies
- N) Expropriation and Compensation
- O) Dispute Settlement, Including
- P) Enforcement of Arbitration
- Q) Political Violence
- R) Bilateral Investment Agreements
- S) OPIC and Other Investment Insurance
- T) Programs
- U) Capital Outflow Policy
- V) Major Foreign Investors
- W) Host Country Contact Information for
- X) Investment-Related Inquiries

VIII. TRADE AND PROJECT FINANCING

- A) Description of the Banking System
- B) Foreign Exchange Controls Affecting Trade
- C) General Availability of Financing
- D) How to Finance Exports/Methods of Payment
- E) Types of Available Export Financing and Insurance
- F) Availability of Project Financing
- G) Types of Projects Receiving Financing Support
- H) List of Banks with Correspondent U.S. Banking Arrangements

IX. BUSINESS TRAVEL

- A) Business Customs
- B) Travel Advisory and Visas
- C) Holidays
- D) Work Week
- E) Business Infrastructure
- F) Temporary Entry of Goods

X. ECONOMIC AND TRADE STATISTICS

Appendix A. Country Data
Appendix B. Domestic Economy
Appendix C. Trade
Appendix D. Investment Statistics

XI. U.S. AND COUNTRY CONTACTS

Appendix E. U.S. and Country Contacts

XII. MARKET RESEARCH AND TRADE EVENTS

Appendix F. Market Research
Appendix G. Trade Event Schedule

I. Executive Summary

This Country Commercial Guide (CCG) presents a comprehensive look at the Republic of Cameroon's commercial environment using economic, political and market analysis. The CCGs were established by recommendation of the Trade Promotion Coordinating Committee (TPCC), a multiagency task force, to consolidate various reporting documents prepared for the U.S. business community. Country Commercial Guides are prepared annually at U.S. Embassies through the combined efforts of several U.S. Government agencies.

Cameroon, just larger in size than the ten states northeast of Maryland, is located on the West Coast of Africa in the Gulf of Guinea. Its population, estimated at 14.9 million, comprises some 250 ethnic groups and its mainly agricultural economy, with a GDP of about \$9 billion, is the largest in the six-nation Central African Economic and Monetary Community (CEMAC). In recent years there has been political turmoil in some of Cameroon's neighbors, but Cameroon, which has a multi-party system and legal opposition, has remained stable. Legislative and presidential elections in 1997 suffered from irregularities, however. Municipal elections are due to be held in 2001 followed by new legislative elections in 2002. President Biya, who dominates the Government, does not finish his term until 2004.

Cash crops such as cocoa, coffee, timber, cotton, bananas and oil exports underpin the economy. Industrial products comprise only a quarter of exports and most private industrial companies are very small relative to American counterparts. After independence, the government created a series of state enterprises in sectors

ranging from air transportation to agro-industry, but these companies could not compete internationally and the economy suffered. In 1997 the Government embarked on a three-year structural adjustment program backed by the IMF and World Bank which concluded in June 2000. The program introduced reforms to the Government budget process, privatized some state enterprises and reorganized Cameroon's inefficient port system. Helped by higher world prices for some of its export commodities, the economy in 2000 was enjoying its fourth consecutive year of GDP growth in the 4-5 percent range. Consumer price inflation during this period averaged 2-3 percent per annum, and the 1997 Paris Club foreign debt rescheduling has enabled Cameroon to build up its foreign exchange reserves. In 1999 and 2000 the construction sector and some segments of light industry were enjoying healthy growth. Cameroon has attracted some foreign investment: a French banking company bought the last state-owned bank in 2000 and a state-owned sugar factory in 1998. A French telecommunications company established a mobile telephone company in Cameroon in late 1999. South African companies, meanwhile, bought the privatized railroad and mobile telephone company. Alucam, a Franco-Cameroonian joint venture in which Pechiney holds a majority stake, plans a major expansion of production capacity in the next several years.

American business activities focus around Cameroon's offshore oil industry and Del Monte has a fruit export project outside of Douala and Dole has part ownership of another banana export operation. The \$3.5 billion Chad-Cameroon pipeline, majority owned by Exxon and Chevron, will boost economic activity in Cameroon over the next several years and generate new revenues for the Government. In addition, U.S. Government initiatives, such as new programs at the U.S. Export-Import Bank and the trade incentives in the African Growth and Opportunity Act could foster new U.S. business opportunities in Cameroon. As Cameroon enjoys trade preferences with its partners in the CEMAC zone, regional political stability should also enhance the attractiveness of Cameroon as a business locale.

Cameroon is a poor country, however, whose per capita income has fallen from \$900 in 1992 to about \$600 in 2000. Many industries in the commercial capital Douala are still uncompetitive, and investment in many sectors has been sluggish. The agriculture sector is suffering from relatively low world prices for commodities such as cocoa and robusta coffee. Repayments on Cameroon's \$7.7 billion foreign debt will consume a large portion of export earnings, and the Cameroonian Government hopes to secure debt forgiveness under the G-7 Heavily Indebted Poor Country initiative in late 2000. Under this initiative the

Government would redirect resources previously dedicated to debt service to reduce poverty in Cameroon through improved health, education and rural infrastructure programs. Concomitant with this debt forgiveness, Cameroon will start another multi-year program with the IMF as it deepens reforms to its budget and financial systems.

The Government wants to attract more foreign investment and is revising its commercial laws; a new industrial code which aims to pull together and simplify existing laws should be finished by the end of 2000. Most of Cameroon, including the two largest cities of Douala and Yaounde, has laws modeled on the French legal system, but western Cameroon has retained British legal systems inherited from the British colonial administration there. The Government guarantees property ownership and repatriation of profits and capital. In practice, however, application of the laws in the administration and courts is problematic and impedes investor confidence. Cameroon has earned an international reputation because of the corruption among many officials. In June 2000 the Government announced it would start a good governance program developed with the United Nations Development Program. While the number of different taxes has been reduced, tax collection can be onerous if a company lacks careful documentation of its business activities.

Cameroon's banking system, while stronger after a restructuring undertaken with assistance from the IMF, is still poorly developed. Cameroonian importers often look for credits from export suppliers rather than seek more expensive financing from local banks. Citibank operates a branch in Douala and most Cameroonian banks have correspondent relationships with some American banks.

American Business Services Centers located at the United States Embassy in Yaounde and at a branch office in Douala are connected to the Internet. In addition, a regional Counselor for Commercial Affairs of the United States Commercial Service located in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire, and an Agricultural Attaché of the Foreign Agricultural Service located in Lagos, Nigeria provide expertise to those looking to do business in Cameroon.

Country Commercial Guides are available for U.S. exporters from the National Trade Data Bank's CD-ROM or via the Internet. Please contact STAT-USA at 1-800-STAT-USA for more information. Country Commercial Guides can be accessed via the World Wide Web at <http://www.stat-usa.gov>; <http://www.state.gov>; and <http://www.mac.doc.gov>. They can also be ordered in hard copy or on diskette from the National Technical Information Service (NTIS)

at 1-800-553-NTIS. U.S. exporters seeking general export information and country-specific commercial information should contact the U.S. Department of Commerce Trade Information Center at 1-800-USA-TRAD(E) or by fax at (202) 482-4473.

II. ECONOMIC TRENDS AND OUTLOOK

A. MAJOR TRENDS AND OUTLOOK

Cameroon enjoys a wealth of natural resources, including agriculture, forests, hydrocarbons, an ample labor force and a geographic location between large markets in Nigeria to the west and Central Africa to the south and east. Cameroon is unusual among French speaking countries in that the majority of its entrepreneurs are local rather than expatriate. Cameroonians are a major commercial force in neighboring countries such as the Republic of the Congo, Gabon and Equatorial Guinea. Following independence in 1960, Cameroon enjoyed a quarter century as one of Africa's more prosperous economies. Cameroon's economy is dependent on commodity exports. However, swings in world prices strongly affect Cameroon's economic growth. Policy mismanagement and a poor business climate have restrained investment and hindered economic diversification. In 1997 Cameroon began a major stabilization and economic reform program in collaboration with the IMF and World Bank. Economic growth has averaged 4-5 percent since the reform program started while price inflation has remained in the 2-3 percent per annum range. Per capita income is about \$600 per annum and growing slowly. Cameroon's foreign debt service obligations consume a large portion of export receipts. In late 2000, Cameroon will seek foreign debt relief under the G-7's Heavily Indebted Poor Countries initiative.

Economic growth in FY 1999/2000 is expected to be about 4.2 percent, down from the 4.4 percent figure of FY 1998/1999. Forest and agricultural export earnings are slumping: world prices for coffee and cocoa are low and wood export earnings are stagnant due to new government regulations banning export of some logs species. The government is attempting to stimulate more timber processing in Cameroon. Some economic sectors, such as construction, enjoy robust growth. Construction of the Chad-Cameroon oil pipeline, a \$3.5 billion project involving U.S. firms such as Exxon-Mobil and Chevron, should boost the local economy when project construction begins in late 2000.

During FY 1998/1999, Cameroon's export earnings dropped six percent in real terms from the previous year's levels, pulled down by low world prices for oil, wood, coffee and cocoa. Imports grew slowly. During 1999, U.S. exports to Cameroon fell to \$37 million, half the level of the previous year. In the early months of 2000, however, U.S. exports were rebounding, led by machinery sales. France is Cameroon's main trade and investment partner. Cameroon is a leading member of the Central African Economic and Monetary Community (in French, CEMAC) which seeks to promote regional trade. Changes to the investment code in 1998 eliminated duties on imports of manufactured goods produced within the CEMAC zone. The liberalization leaves only the value-added tax in place, and in theory this should be the practice in the other CEMAC member states. In practice, poor transportation links and a lack of economic diversity constrain development of closer trade ties within the CEMAC region.

A new tariff code enacted in January 1994 lifted many quantitative restrictions on imports and eased many import licensing requirements so that Cameroon's tariff code came into conformity with CEMAC regulations.

The Bank of Central African States (in French, BEAC) sets monetary policy for the CEMAC states, including Cameroon. The currency is the Franc CFA which is held at a fixed exchange rate to the French franc and is readily convertible into the French currency. Cameroon's commercial banking sector, once dominated by government-owned banks, has been restructured. A French banking company bought Cameroon's last state-owned bank in early 2000. The BEAC's foreign exchange reserves have grown substantially, and the bank was planning to ease credit during the second half of 2000.

The business climate in Cameroon has restrained investment but the Government and the business sector are trying to improve it. The 1994 tax reforms simplified rates and eliminated some tax loopholes. The tax code was further simplified in the 1999 budget. In January 1999, a value-added tax at a uniform rate of 18.7 percent replaced the sales tax. However, because the tax authorities sometimes act in a capricious manner, the Government's tax collection often is an onerous management burden on foreign and Cameroonian companies. Trade reforms abolished all remaining qualitative restrictions on merchandise imports. Workers retain significant abilities to file grievance suits. Cameroon is readying an Investment Charter likely to become law in late 2000 or early 2001, which will integrate all the recent incentives into a coherent code. Price controls were lifted in 1994, with the exception of those on water, electricity, collective passenger surface transport, pharmaceuticals, petroleum products, and schoolbooks. In

conjunction with the World Bank, the Government began liberalizing the inefficient and corrupt customs procedures at Douala Port, although transit time through the port remains relatively long.

Cameroon is a member of the Organization to Harmonize Business Law in Africa (in French, OHADA) which seeks to standardize commercial law in 15 francophone West African countries. OHADA aims to improve commercial dispute settlement and provide for international arbitration in business disputes. The French Government and the U.S. Department of Commerce are providing technical assistance to OHADA. In early 1999, Cameroon's Council of Business Managers and Professional Associations (GICAM), (145 enterprises representing 70 percent of all formal sector business activity in Cameroon) created an Arbitration Center for its members to avoid the long judicial processes common in Cameroon. CEMAC also has created a business dispute arbitration center, located in N'djamena, but it is not yet active.

Corruption is a major problem in Cameroon. In a poll of international companies undertaken by a German non-governmental organization, Transparency International, Cameroon received the worst corruption rating among countries studied in 1998 and 1999. In his 1999 New Year address, President Biya castigated magistrates and the police force for mishandling the justice system the government of significant customs and tax revenues. In June 2000, the Government approved a good governance program developed with the United Nations Development Program, which may help to reduce corruption.

The World Bank Group, African Development Bank (AfDB) Group, European Community (EU) and Government of France have provided substantial external financing to Cameroon since 1989 to bolster economic reform efforts and restore sustainable economic growth. In its FY 2000/2001 budget the Government projected it would receive about CFA franc 180 billion in foreign project financing and CFA franc 94 billion in budgetary support in return for implementation of reform policies. World Bank and AfDB projects create additional contracting and investment opportunities for U.S. business people.

B. PRINCIPAL GROWTH SECTORS

Cameroon's economy, long based on agricultural commodity and oil exports, is slowly evolving and new sectors, while still small, are spurring Cameroon's growth. Cameroon's export sector remains subject to swings in world commodity

prices. Business ventures targeting the Cameroonian and Central African market face a price sensitive customer base with limited incomes.

During FY 99, Cameroon's construction sector expanded steadily. According to a survey among members of the private business association GICAM, construction company members registered a surge of nearly 25 percent in business incomes. This growth continued into 2000, spurred in part by foreign donor financing for road construction. The EU began financing the road between Belabo and Garoua-Boulai in eastern Cameroon. This should spur development in eastern Cameroon as well as trade links with Chad and the Central African Republic. In northwestern Cameroon, the Chinese also are building roads. Maintenance of roads is a major concern, as Cameroon's heavy rainfall in the southern regions punishes road surfaces. The Chad-Cameroon pipeline project will further boost the construction sector in Cameroon. There was also some residential and commercial construction. Construction technologies and standards are far below those of the United States. The surge in construction sector activity boosted cement production; the GICAM survey found business revenues in that sector jumping 24 percent during FY1998/1999.

Light manufacturing grew during 1999, although at a slower pace than the construction sector. The GICAM survey found business incomes among companies in food processing rose about 8 percent during the first three-quarters of 1999. In particular, there were new investments in local agriculture-based manufacturing such as fruit juices, dairy products, beers and soaps, targeting the local market. Some segments of the market appear saturated, as consumer incomes remain relatively low, but new products coming on line often aim at replacing more expensive imports, such as pastas and fruit drinks. Many raw ingredients, including milk powder and wheat, still must be imported for transformation. The increase in food processing spurred some growth in the packaging sector; the GICAM business survey found business revenues among companies in that sector grew about 4 percent in FY1998/1999. Anecdotal evidence suggested growth in packaging continued into the year 2000.

In 1999, the portion of the population with regular access to basic utility services was limited and there was a surge in investment to upgrade and expand telecommunications. Companies from France and South Africa established new cellular telephone businesses. There is additional foreign interest in parts of the national water utility, the electricity utility and the main telephone utility and expansion of those networks should boost economic activity in 2001. The Government was anxious to promote additional production of electric power

through development of onshore and offshore gas fields, which would supply new electricity plants.

Cameroon's agriculture sector, the underpinning of the economy and the main employer, is suffering from low world prices. Nevertheless, some private investors see expansion opportunities. Cameroonian households consume large quantities of relatively inexpensive palm oil, and there are significant export opportunities within the sub-region if production could increase. Banana exports to Europe have increased due to the preferential access granted by the European Union to African-Caribbean-Pacific (ACP) producers. That preferential access may change due to a ruling by the World Trade Organization that the ACP access rules violated WTO rules. However, some private firms believe that large-scale, higher yield production of commodities such as bananas eventually could make Cameroon competitive even without the preferential access. Developing such larger-scale farming will mean a substantial transformation of Cameroon's agricultural sector, now marked by small, poorly financed landholdings.

C. GOVERNMENT ROLE IN THE ECONOMY

The Cameroonian Government in the summer of 2000 will complete a three-year structural adjustment program backed by the IMF and World Bank. The program has introduced profound changes to Cameroon's economic management. Cameroonian Government expenditures, including its separate public investment budget and debt service outlays, should reach CFA franc 1.476 trillion (about \$2 billion at June 2000 exchange rate), representing roughly 22 percent of GDP, according to the budget law passed by the National Assembly in June 2000. The current operating budget accounts for nearly half of the total CFA franc 1.476 billion budget, and over a quarter of the budget is used for debt service, and about another quarter is projected to be spent on public investment projects, including infrastructure. The Education, Defense, Public Works and Health Ministries again are to receive the largest part of the current operating budget.

The Government has eliminated all non-forestry export taxes, established government bodies to combat monopolistic market prices in Cameroon and revamped its tax collection system. The Government has kept its budget deficit to around 3-4 percent of GDP during its reform program; the Prime Minister told the National Assembly in June 2000 that the budget deficit target for FY 2000/2001 would be two percent of GDP. As part of its drive to control deficit spending, the Finance Ministry is striving to improve domestic revenue collection. The Prime

Minister stated in June 2000 that the Ministry's Tax Authority would increase tax audits during FY2000/2001.

The Government also is engaged in an extensive privatization program, and has closed or sold all the state-owned banks, as well as companies involved in sugar and rubber production, rail and maritime transport and mobile telephone services and the palm oil producer SOCAPALM. During FY 2001, the Government may complete transfer of the national water and electricity utilities, and the national telephone utility. In addition, the Government plans to privatize major agro-industrial enterprises, such as the Cameroon Development Corporation (Cameroon's largest company, producing tea, palm oil, bananas and rubber), and the cotton and textile enterprise SODECOTON. The World Bank provides technical assistance to these privatizations.

The Cameroonian Government does not directly control interest rates or monetary policy; the six-member Bank of Central African states (in French, BEAC), in conjunction with the French Ministry of Finance, guides monetary policy for Cameroonian and other member states of the BEAC.

D. BALANCE OF PAYMENTS SITUATION

Cameroon's balance of payments situation is characterized by large foreign debt repayments financed either by diminishing trade surpluses or by accumulation of debt payment arrearages. Since 1997 Cameroon has enjoyed substantial debt payment relief under a three-year Paris Club agreement in conjunction with the ongoing economic reform program.

Cameroon's export earnings have slumped since 1997, dropping from CFA 1,141 billion in FY 1997/1998 (about \$1.9 billion at then current exchange rate) to about CFA 841 billion in FY 1999/2000 (about \$1.25 billion at the prevailing exchange rate). While some commodity export volumes have slumped, lower world commodity prices for goods such as cocoa and lumber also have reduced export earnings. World commodity prices are a key economic concern, as primary commodities account for most of Cameroon's exports, while industrial products represented only 26 percent of Cameroon's exports in FY1999/2000, according to Cameroonian Government data. Petroleum is Cameroon's most important export commodity, accounting for about forty percent of export earnings in FY 1999/2000. As part of its drive to boost export earnings, the government was striving to attract new foreign investment into offshore and onshore concessions. Cameroon's other main exports are coffee, cocoa, cotton, bananas and lumber.

Cameroon's imports also have been stagnant, dropping from CFA 847 billion in FY 1997/1998 (about \$1.4 billion at then-current exchange rate) to CFA 633 billion in FY 1999/2000 (about \$945 million at prevailing exchange rate). Cameroon imports mainly semi-processed products and other industrial inputs, machinery and food products. While Cameroon produces and exports heavy crude, in FY 1999/2000 it imported CFA 99 billion CFA (about \$150 million) of light crude oil (which is suitable for its refinery) from Nigeria, Equatorial Guinea, Ivory Coast, Angola, and Italy.

The European Union remains Cameroon's main trading partner. In FY 1999/2000, about 21 percent of Cameroonian exports went to Italy, with those to France accounting for another 16 percent. Exports to the U.S. represented only three percent of Cameroon's overall export earnings. France is by a wide margin Cameroon's major supplier of imported goods and services. The U.S. provided only five percent of Cameroon's imports in FY 1999/2000. During the first four months of CY 2000, U.S. exports to Cameroon totaled about \$15 million, a notable increase from the same period of the previous year, led by sales of machinery.

Cameroon's foreign exchange reserves, held at the BEAC, rose about CFA 45 billion (roughly \$70 million) during FY 1999/2000, but the debt service burden remains substantial. Cameroon's debt stock totaled about \$7.7 billion in late 1999 and payments of principal and interest prior to rescheduling totaled about 20 percent. Cameroon in the summer of 2000 was preparing with IMF and World Bank assistance an application for debt forgiveness under the G-7's Heavily Indebted Poor Countries initiative which would cut the debt stock drastically if approved.

E. INFRASTRUCTURE

Cameroon's infrastructure is not fully developed but permits limited access to all ten provinces. Cameroon's main industrial and commercial port city, Douala, is linked to major cities in the seven southern provinces by good roads. It is also linked by rail to Yaounde, the capital and second major city, and to Ngaoundere in the north.

In terms of economic potential, Douala is the major entry point for imports not only to Cameroon but also to the entire central African region including the Central African Republic, Chad, and Equatorial Guinea (Cameroon's eighth most

important import/export trading partner). Douala Port handles about 95 percent of the total maritime traffic of Cameroon and more than 90 percent of the country's external trade. The current port at Limbe is small by comparison to Douala, and it handles such products as coffee, cocoa, palm nuts, rubber, and timber. The other deep sea port, Kribi, handles timber for 80 percent of its total traffic, with the remaining part being cocoa, coffee, flour, and salt. The port of Douala, however, is a bottleneck to trade in need of equipment upgrades. It also requires constant dredging and will not be able to handle the next generation of larger freight ships. To facilitate flow of maritime traffic as Cameroon further develops, the GOVERNMENT may create a second major port in Cameroon. Limbe, or perhaps Kribi, may be opened to foreign investment for development of deep-sea ports. Additional infrastructure, notably roads and power, would have to accompany such an expansion. The U.S. Trade and Development Agency in 2000 funded a feasibility study to determine the commercial viability of creating such a port at Limbe.

Distribution to northern provinces is mainly through the railhead at Ngaoundere, where regional warehouses stock goods for onward road delivery to other northern cities and Chad. The railway line also links Douala to the East province, which serves as a transit point for goods bound for the Central African Republic. Three international airports at Douala, Yaounde and Garoua have facilities for airfreight. There are over 50 small airports and airstrips, of which only nine have permanent surface runways and only three (Maroua, Geroua and Ngaoundere) are currently in use.

Utility and telephone services are available in the two largest cities, Yaounde and Douala, but they are not always reliable due to poor maintenance and mismanagement. Outside of Yaounde and Douala few Cameroonians have telephone service, and it is difficult to reach many towns and cities due to unreliable non-mobile telecommunications networks. The telephone company CAMTEL (formerly INTELCAM) was connected to the Internet in April 1997, yet recent infrastructure construction in Douala has made it possible to by-pass CAMTEL as an Internet provider. Mobile telecommunications services should improve with the introduction to Cameroon of two foreign mobile telephone companies.

During the years of economic crisis, few major infrastructure projects were initiated, causing major degradation to Cameroon's infrastructure. For this reason, future investment possibilities in maintenance and infrastructure rebuilding may offer opportunities for U.S. investors. Road projects financed by the European

Union, Agence Francaise de Developpement and the World Bank to link Cameroon, C.A.R. and Equatorial Guinea by paved road will continue during FY2001. Substantial road rehabilitation and road construction is also expected in conjunction with the construction of the Chad/Cameroon pipeline. Electricity, telephone and water services are available in Cameroon's cities, larger towns and some villages and rural areas.

III. POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT

A. NATURE OF POLITICAL RELATIONSHIP WITH THE UNITED STATES

US-Cameroon relations are generally good. The U.S. military conducted a medical training exercise with the Cameroonian military in March 2000. The Prime Minister visited Washington and three other American cities in April 2000 to generate greater attention for Cameroon among the U.S. business community. The U.S. Government is providing technical assistance through feasibility studies from the U.S. Trade and Development Agency for Cameroon's airports and for a port expansion project. The U.S. Department of Transportation is providing technical assistance through the Safe Skies for Africa initiative.

The U.S. Government finances bilateral aid projects valued at approximately 5 million U.S. dollar each year. USAID provides funding for family health and AIDS prevention and also for rainforest conservation through the Central African Regional Program for the Environment (CARPE). The Ambassador's Self-Help Fund and the Democracy and Human Rights Funds together finance \$150,000 worth of small, grass-roots projects. About 170 Peace Corps volunteers currently work in agroforestry, education, health and small business development. The Public Affairs section of the U.S. Embassy organizes and funds, inter alia, discussions on economic and civic issues and education and cultural exchange programs.

B. MAJOR POLITICAL ISSUES AFFECTING BUSINESS CLIMATE

The Presidency dominates Cameroon's politics, and the ruling Cameroon People's Democratic Movement party, headed by President Biya, controls the National Assembly. The political opposition is fractured. A vocal minority from the English-speaking population advocates either a more federal structure of government or complete succession from the francophone majority state. So far the agitation from these groups has been peaceful. Amnesty International and

other domestic and international groups have criticized government suppression of agitators. The U.S. Department of State's 2000 Report on Country Human Rights Practices details some of the human rights problems in Cameroon.

The government professes to want the decentralization of government functions, but has not created pre-constitutionally-mandated regional councils which would give greater authority to provincial governments it has installed administrators to manage Cameroon's largest cities. Most funding for local services, such as health care and education comes from ministerial budgets determined in Yaounde.

Cameroon's incremental progress toward reforming its economy has engendered opposition, within the ruling party. The reform program includes budget stringency, a reduction of civil servants and the privatization of many public enterprises. Rampant corruption and a dysfunctional judicial system hamper development of Cameroon's economy and society. The Government has pledged to implement a program of good governance reforms designed with assistance from the United Nations Development Program.

Cameroon is part of the Central African Economic and Monetary Committee (CEMAC), which was formalized in June 1999 in Malabo, and which is to supersede the Central African Customs and Economic Union (UDEAC). Cameroon maintains stable relations with its francophone neighbors, although local rivalries and lack of transportation networks constrain faster political and economic integration. At a 1999 meeting in Douala, CEMAC states agreed to create a regional stock exchange. However, rivalry between Cameroon and Gabon over installing the exchange in Douala or Libreville threatens to delay the exchange's opening, once planned for November 2000. During a CEMAC meeting held in May 2000, CEMAC officials agreed to launch the study of a CEMAC passport which they hope will contribute to regional exchanges.

Cameroon has a problematic relationship with Nigeria; the two states contest the delineation of their border at the Gulf of Guinea; and the dispute could have a bearing on ownership of offshore oilfields. There have been isolated instances of cross border shooting, but these have been quickly contained. The dispute is before the International Court of Justice (ICJ).

BRIEF SYNOPSIS OF POLITICAL SYSTEM, SCHEDULE FOR ELECTIONS AND ORIENTATION OF MAJOR POLITICAL PARTIES

Cameroon is a republic dominated by a strong presidency. The President names

and dismisses cabinet members and judges, ratifies treaties, leads the armed forces, and has considerable authority in other areas. He appoints the governors of Cameroon's ten provinces and his government has wide authority to re-organize electoral districts. The judiciary is subject to political influence and suffers from corruption and inefficiency.

Since independence, a single party, now called the Cameroon People's Democratic Movement (CPDM), has remained in power and limited political choice. In October 1997 CPDM leader Paul Biya won reelection as President in an election boycotted by the three main opposition parties, marred by a wide range of procedural flaws, and generally considered by observers not to be free and fair. Although the Government legalized opposition parties in 1990, numerous irregularities tainted subsequent elections. The President retains the power to control legislation or to rule by decree. In the National Assembly, government bills take precedence over other bills, and no bills other than government bills have been enacted since 1991, although the Assembly has stopped some legislation proposed by the Government. The President repeatedly has used his control of the legislature to change the Constitution. The 1996 Constitution lengthened the President's term of office to 7 years, while continuing to allow Biya to run for a fourth consecutive term in 1997 and making him eligible to run for one more 7-year term in 2004. The Government has taken no formal action to implement other 1996 constitutional changes that provide for new legislative institutions, including a partially elected senate and elected regional councils, and a more independent judiciary. Municipal elections are scheduled for 2001 and legislative elections are tentatively scheduled for 2002.

Cameroon has more than 150 legalized political parties, but most are without substance or appear to seek political power only for financial rewards. Cameroon's opposition political parties profess to support multi-party democracy, and individual freedoms and liberties. Few have well defined economic programs. Almost all advocate a mixture of state intervention and vigorous private entrepreneurship. Political parties are free to voice their opinions since 1996 legislation abolished censorship. Opposition legislators in the National Assembly represent only 23 percent of members and are not able to stop ruling party policy initiatives.

IV. MARKETING U.S. PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

A. STEPS TO ESTABLISHING AN OFFICE

In theory, establishing a business can be accomplished in as little as a month. The two English-speaking provinces are governed by Common Law and incorporating can take as little as 48 hours. Companies incorporated in any part of the country are legal within the entire territory. To avoid long bureaucratic delays, a lawyer might help incorporation where it is most suitable. Potential investors should be aware that the 8 French-speaking provinces are governed by the Civil Code which is largely inspired from the French legal system. Obtaining government approvals after incorporation in Cameroon can be a lengthy processing involving a series of government ministries.

The Investment Code Management Unit (ICMU) was established in 1991 to assist foreign and domestic investors in starting businesses in Cameroon. It has never performed as a one stop window for investors, but rather has worked as an agency dispensing special investment authorizations under the special Investment Code schedule. The 1994 tax reforms that revoked all special schedule benefits, but the ICMU can still provide useful information about investment regulations and commercial laws. Contact Ms. Marthe Angeline Minja, Director, ICMU, P.O. Box 15438, Douala, Tel: 237-42-59-46/43-31-11, fax: 237 43-30-07.

Office space prices in mid 2000 in the commercial capital Douala appeared to be increasing as a result of speculation attached to the start of construction on the Chad-Cameroon pipeline project. Very roughly, Douala office space appeared to cost about \$10-14 per square foot in a good Douala neighborhood. A two bedroom apartment roughly costs about \$1,200-\$1,500 monthly in a good Douala neighborhood. As an example of wage costs, expatriate companies pay local secretaries \$6,000 - \$11,000 annually, depending on the secretary's level of experience.

B. CREATING A JOINT VENTURE

Seeking professional assistance in negotiating agreements, selecting partners and carefully controlling resources are vital when establishing a presence in the Cameroonian market. Caution is required for joint ventures and licensing arrangements, as widespread corruption presents risks. Investors also often complain of undue influence from entrenched French interests.

C. USE OF AGENTS AND DISTRIBUTORS; FINDING A PARTNER

Several dozen U.S. companies are represented in Cameroon, either directly or through agents or distributors. U.S. businesses planning to enter the Cameroonian market should find a local agent who sells directly to wholesalers and can help new firms obtain market knowledge at low cost. For products requiring after-sales service and spare parts, the appointment of a distributor is recommended. Agents and distributors must register with the Government, and their contracts must be notarized and published in the local press.

D. FINDING A LOCAL ATTORNEY

Incoming American investors should use a local attorney to deal with Cameroon's slow moving, complex and sometimes corrupt legal system. A list of local attorneys can be obtained from the U.S. Embassy in Yaounde.

E. PERFORMING DUE DILIGENCE/CHECKING BONA FIDES OF BANKS/AGENTS/CUSTOMERS

Investors wishing to do business in Cameroon should seek professional assistance in negotiating agreements, in the selection of partners, and in the control of resources. Before selecting their Cameroonian partners, businesses are advised to consult with the Embassy or use the professional assistance of one of the Country Market Research Firms listed in Chapter XII below. The U.S. Embassy offers a variety of services for American businesses looking at the Cameroonian market, and these services are described in Appendix E.

F. DISTRIBUTION AND SALES CHANNELS

Cameroon has a population estimated at 14.9 million, of which about 47 percent live in urban areas. Douala is Cameroon's main port and industrial center. Cameroon's capital city Yaounde is the political capital. Yaounde (population approximately 1,200,000) and Douala (population approximately 2,000,000) together contain about 60 percent of Cameroon's urban population and 20 percent of its total population. Europeans, Lebanese and the indigenous Bamileke of the West Province dominate large trading firms in Cameroon. Most have developed efficient distribution systems, and several have established stores and supermarkets for retail sales. In smaller towns, mainly local or Nigerian and Senegalese traders control retailing. Vendors who sell their wares from rented stalls at the main markets of cities occupy about 35 percent of the retail market in Cameroon. Cameroonian buyers are usually very price sensitive, and street hawkers hold a substantial share of the retail segment. They generally sell on a

commission basis for established storeowners, but some are independent and buy directly from wholesalers.

G. FRANCHISING AND DIRECT MARKETING

Franchising is rare in Cameroon. While large international oil companies retail petroleum products, and international car rental companies operate through franchise dealers, there are few other franchise operations in Cameroon. Direct marketing is used in Cameroon, though it is not a common practice.

H. SELLING FACTORS/TECHNIQUES

Seller's credit, such as lay-away plans, is not yet practiced in Cameroon. Commercial banks offer consumer loans for large individual purchases.

I. PRODUCT PRICING AND LICENSING

U.S. exporters can price their product in French francs, especially for deliveries over a six to 12 month period, as the currency in Cameroon is maintained at a fixed exchange rate with the French franc. Costs should be computed on a Cost, Insurance, and Freight (C.I.F.) basis. The major factors in penetrating the Cameroonian market may be price and credits.

With the exception of "strategic" goods and services such as electricity, water, public transportation (road/rail), telecommunications, cooking gas, pharmaceuticals, and portside activities (stevedoring, etc.), the GOVERNMENT lifted all price controls on commodities marketed within its national territory in 1994.

Businesses generally use the price of the imported good as the reference price for future production. Profit margins are not fixed for imported goods.

Few internationally known American products other than oil, soft drinks and gas are produced in Cameroon under licensing agreements

J. ADVERTISING AND TRADE PROMOTION

Advertising is available in Cameroon through a wide variety of media including newspapers, magazines, billboards, theatres, radio and television, many of whom are listed in Appendix E. Newspaper and magazine advertising may be placed at

reasonable rates with the government-owned daily, Cameroon Tribune, or with over 20 private publications. Major newspapers and magazines include:

Cameroon Tribune (government bilingual daily: P.O. Box 1218, Yaounde, Cameroon, Tel: 237-30-26-40 or 30-36-89 Fax: 237-30-43-62);

La Nouvelle Expression (French-language three times a week: P.O. Box 15333, Douala, Cameroon, Tel: 237-42-22-27 Fax: 237-43-26-69);

The Herald (English-language three times a week P.O. Box 3659, Messa Yaounde, Cameroon, Tel/Fax: 237-31-84-97);

Le Messenger (French-language three times a week P.O. Box 5925, Douala, Cameroon, Tel: 237-42-02-39 or 42-04-39 Fax: 237-42-02-14);

La Sentinelle (French-language monthly is the only economic magazine published in Central Africa: P.O. Box 24079, Douala, Cameroon, Tel: 237-39-16-27 Fax: 237-39-11-63).

Billboards and signs are no longer a monopoly of Cameroon Publi-Expansion (CPE), a government-owned publicity parastatal. Private advertising firms may be contacted for publicity assistance. A monthly information guide for Douala (Night & Day) published by Synergie is distributed free. Advertising via slides and short films in theatres can be effective, especially in Yaounde, Douala and Bafoussam, which have large film-going publics. Radio and television advertising at reasonable rates is available through the government-owned Cameroon Radio Television (CRTV) which broadcasts in French and English. The recent decision by the government to liberalize the audio-visual sector is likely to bring new advertising options.

The only regularly scheduled trade fairs in Cameroon are the Bafoussam fair in February and "Promo," a general trade fair organized at the end of each year in Yaounde by the Cameroon Chamber of Commerce. Details on "Promo" are in Appendix G. Individual companies sometimes also organize expositions in Douala and Yaounde.

K. SALES SERVICE/CUSTOMER SUPPORT

After-sales service and customer support is weak or non-existent in Cameroon's bazaar-like domestic market. It has limited U.S. marketing success in Cameroon, especially in the high-tech or heavy industrial equipment areas where sales service is critical. French language service manuals, frequent personnel training and reasonable inventory of spare parts are also crucial.

L. GOVERNMENT PROCUREMENT PRACTICES

Government procurement is made by the "Direction Générale des Grands Travaux" (DGTC), or the Public Works Directorate which is under the direct supervision of the Presidency of the Republic. Cameroonian companies receive preferential price margins, often around 15 percent, and other preferential treatment for bids on all government procurement and development projects. DGTC's calls for tenders, especially when they are financed by the International Financial Institutions, are mailed to the American Embassy in Yaounde which sends them to the U.S. Department of Commerce for dissemination to the American business community. Restricted calls for tenders are also sent to U.S. bidding candidates by the Embassy. The GOVERNMENT has been improving upon its low credit rating since the start of the economic structural adjustment program in 1997, and an increasing number of U.S. financing programs have opened for both the private and public sector. The Government's direct purchases are often made through domestic middlemen who require cash up front on behalf of their foreign correspondents.

V. LEADING SECTORS FOR U.S. EXPORTS AND INVESTMENT

The United States supplied 5 percent of Cameroon's total imports in 1999. It ranked fourth behind France which provided 28 percent of total Cameroonian imports, Nigeria (12 percent, representing high grade crude used in Cameroon's national refinery), and Germany (6 percent). Cameroon will continue to import machinery, wheat and flour, petroleum coke and additives for aluminum smelting, used clothing and gross lot discounted consumer products from the U.S. The start of a multi-billion dollar investment to develop oil fields in Chad and build an oil pipeline through Cameroon has market prospects for U.S. exports. The U.S. Embassy has identified the following sectors as having potential for American exporters: agricultural inputs including fertilizer, heavy machinery and material for forestry, transport and road construction, pipeline construction and related services such as security and communications, computer, electronic equipment, and aircraft parts.

In particular, these sectors appear promising over the short and medium terms:

- 1) heavy machinery; equipment and material for transportation, agriculture, road construction/maintenance and oil and gas field exploration/production services; pipeline construction equipment and machinery, because of renewed activity;

- 2) wood and materials handling machinery (skidders, harvesters, dozers, stackers, cranes, winches, trucks, trailers and buses) because of continuing timber industry expansion; also sawmill equipment and machinery (to meet the requirement that starting in year 2000 timber company should locally transform their logs);
- 3) aircraft and parts, because of the liberalization of the air transport sector;
- 4) agricultural products including wheat, meslin flour, malt extract, corn, and soy beans;
- 5) textiles and apparel because of the growing market for used clothing and footwear;
- 6) agricultural inputs including fertilizer, insecticides and fungicides for retail sale (due to the liberalization of the cash crop production sector)
- 7) raw materials and other inputs for light industry which continues to grow; related services such as security, communications, and computer and electronic equipment

The Cameroonian market for U.S. exports is small. After a rapid growth from 1995 to 1997, U.S. exports to Cameroon declined by 38 percent in 1998, falling from USD 122 million in 1997 to USD 75 million in 1998. These exports fell further by 50.6 percent in 1999 to USD 37 million. However, U.S. exports to Cameroon were rebounding in early 2000; during the first four months of the year, exports totaled \$15 million, twice the level of the same period in 1999.

A. BEST PROSPECTS FOR NON-AGRICULTURAL GOODS AND SERVICES

1 - OIL/GAS FIELD MACH., OIL, GAS MINERAL PROD/EXPLOR SERV. (OGM, OGS)

The start of construction of the Chad/Cameroon pipeline will boost U.S. exports of this category of equipment. Additional exploration and development of fields in the Gulf of Guinea and in Northern Cameroon could boost imports of oil- and gasfield equipment.

	1998	1999	2000
(Est.)			
TOTAL IMPORTS	23.4*	11.6*	13.0*
IMPORTS FROM THE U.S	19.2	7.1*	10.0*

2- AIRCRAFT/PARTS (AIR)

Imports of aircraft and parts from U.S. may increase if the national airline (CAMAIR) financial situation is resolved; the company existing fleet is old and in need of replacement. Another small domestic company has started limited domestic service and likely will look for medium-sized commuter aircraft. All the airplanes in use in Cameroon are of American origin.

	1998	1999	2000
(Est.)			
TOTAL IMPORTS	N/A	N/A	N/A
IMPORTS FROM THE U.S	7.8	2.1	3.0

3 - TRUCKS, TRAILERS/BUSES (TRK)

The Cameroon Government has made a priority in its FY 2000/2001 investment budget to build additional road infrastructure; additional road building and the construction of the Chad/Cameroon pipeline will improve prospects for U.S. exports of heavy duty equipment in Cameroon.

	1998	1999	2000
(Est.)			
TOTAL IMPORTS	27.0*	4.5*	12.0*
IMPORTS FROM THE U.S	9.3	1.5	4.0

4 - AGRICULTURAL CHEMICALS (AGC)

The market for fertilizers and insecticides should increase substantially during the coming years. European products now dominate the market. Over the medium term, greater emphasis given to rural development in the World Bank poverty-reduction program should boost agricultural output and the demand for agricultural inputs (pesticide, fungicides, and fertilizers). In addition, large state-owned enterprises now in the process of privatization will need substantial new investment of existing plantations. The Government's FY 200/2001 budget exempts some agricultural inputs from import taxes.

	1998	1999	2000
(Est.)			
TOTAL IMPORTS	N/A	N/A	N/A
IMPORTS FROM THE U.S	1.0	1.2	1.5

5 - MINERAL ADDITIVES FOR THE ALUMINUM INDUSTRY (CMT)

Cameroon's joint-venture aluminum plant, Alucam is majority owned by the French company Pechiney. Aluminum represented 5.5 percent of Cameroon's exports in 1999. The processing plant has increased its imports of petroleum coke and pitch. Given the competitive price of American suppliers, the factory has continued to import from the U.S. Over the next several years, Alucam plans substantial investments to double its production, and prospects for coke and pitch will improve as production capacity increases.

	1998	1999	2000 (Est.)
TOTAL IMPORTS	7.6	10.4	10.4
IMPORTS FROM THE U.S	2.4	4.0 (Est.)	4.2 (Est.)

B. BEST PROSPECTS FOR AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS

Cereal imports into Cameroon, including corn and wheat, constitute the main agricultural commodity imports from the U.S. If the GSM program becomes operational in Cameroon, imports of these cereals could increase.

	1998	1999	2000
(Est.)			
TOTAL IMPORTS	N/A	N/A	N/A
IMPORTS FROM THE U.S	3.4	5.3	6.0

1 - WHEAT

Cameroon has five major flourmills. All use a mixture of American and European wheat but in differing proportions. American wheat is currently quoted as more expensive when bought through American dealers rather than European intermediaries. U.S. wheat exports to Cameroon decreased to 4.5 million tons in 1998. There was a small increase in 1999.

2 - CORN

Imports of U.S. corn peaked at USD 1.8 million in 1997 when there was an acute food shortage in northern Cameroon and one of Cameroon's main animal feed manufacturers also bought corn from the U.S. U.S. exports of corn will likely stabilize around USD 1 million over the next several years.

C. SIGNIFICANT INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The Cameroonian Government is privatizing some state enterprises, which offers U.S. firms an opportunity to bid on World Bank monitored sales. Sales either underway or slated in the next several years include CDC (the country's largest agricultural plantations project), SODECOTON (the cotton ginning and textile company), CAMTEL (telecommunications), CAMAIR (the national airline), and SONEL (electrical utility) and the National Insurance Retirement Fund (CNPS).

During FY 1999/2000, SOCAPALM (a palm oil company), BICEC (banking), CAMTEL Mobile (telecommunications), SNEC (water utilities), SOCAR (Insurance company) were privatized. French and South African companies have won many of the bidding competitions.

The Government of the United States acknowledges the contribution that outward foreign direct investment makes to the U.S. economy. U.S. foreign direct investment is increasingly viewed as a complement or even a necessary component of trade. Nearly sixty percent of total U.S. exports originate with American firms with investments abroad. Recognizing the benefits that U.S. outward investment brings to the U.S. economy, the Government of the United States undertakes initiatives, such as Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) programs, bilateral investment treaty negotiations and business facilitation programs, that support U.S. investors.

VI. TRADE REGULATIONS AND STANDARDS

A. MEMBERSHIP IN FREE TRADE ARRANGEMENTS , TRADE BARRIERS, INCLUDING TARIFF AND NON-TARIFF BARRIERS

Cameroon belongs to all multilateral free trade arrangements except the ATA Carnets Convention. A signatory member of the Lome Convention, Cameroon enjoys special trading advantages with the European Union, its largest trading partner. Cameroon is also a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and is one of only six countries in Sub-Saharan Africa to have had its trade policies reviewed through the Trade Policy Review Mechanism (TPRM). Cameroon has established an inter-ministerial committee to monitor and implement its WTO commitments.

In January 1994 Cameroon became the first state of the six-nation Central African Economic and Monetary Union (CEMAC) to implement new custom and investment codes. The code eliminated quantitative restrictions on imports, lifted non-tariff protections, eliminated many import licensing requirements, and simplified customs assessments. In January 1998, the tariff code was further liberalized to facilitate regional trade within CEMAC by eliminating duties on manufactured goods, leaving only the Value Added Tax (VAT) which became effective as of January 1999. A functioning, stable CEMAC customs code may ultimately facilitate shipment and sales within Central Africa.

B. TARIFF RATES

The 1994 Regional Fiscal Reform Program outlines six different tariffs and taxes associated with importation of goods: The Common External Tariff, the Generalized Preferential Tariff, the Temporary Surcharge, the Excise Tax, the Value Added Tax, and other Service Taxes.

The Common External Tariff (T.E.C.) regroups merchandises in four categories, with rates ranging from 5 to 30 percent:

Cat I : First necessity goods	Rate : 5 percent
Cat II : Raw materials and equipment	Rate : 10 percent
Cat III : Intermediary (semi-processed) goods	Rate : 20 percent
Cat IV : Final products (consumption goods)	Rate : 30 percent

The Temporary Surcharge was a tax to protect the national economy. It concerned only some categories of merchandise and ranged from 0 to 30 percent. In accordance with commitments to the World Trade Organization, this tax disappeared on July 1, 2000.

The Excise Tax, an indirect tax on consumption goods, covers specific categories of goods defined by ministerial ordinance. Its rate in Cameroon is 25 percent.

The Value Added Tax (T.V.A.) is a consumption tax. It is levied on both merchandise entering the country and merchandise sold on the local market. For some products, the rate is 0 percent. For other products, the general rate is 17 percent plus a communal tax of 10 percent of the value of the general rate tax, or an overall 18.7 percent tax.

Finally there are miscellaneous taxes on services. The administration of these tariffs is very complex. Any potential exporter to Cameroon might want to contact the Customs Administration or the Geneva-based Société Générale de Surveillance (SGS), which handles customs valuation. The SGS, which verifies the quantity, quality and pricing of Cameroonian imports, is headquartered at SGS Control Services, Inc., 42 Broadway, New York, New York 10004 (212/482-8700; Fax: 212/224-9122). A list of SGS field offices in the United States can be obtained from that office.

C. PROHIBITED IMPORTS

Prohibited imports include specific sanitary products, chemicals, toxic waste, some cosmetics, and some food items. The list of prohibited imports can be modified. A complete list of prohibited imports is included in the General Trade Schedule (GTS) that is available for public distribution. American companies may obtain a copy of the GTS from the Cameroonian Embassy in Washington.

D. IMPORT TAXES AND LICENSE REQUIREMENTS

The 1994 Regional Fiscal Reform Program outlines six different tariffs and taxes associated with importation, which are all discussed above.

Import licensing has been simplified. Currently a prospective importer needs only the "agrément" in order to import. The "agrément" is a general import license delivered to registered businesses for a duration of two years, renewable, to cover

any item that the importer may choose. Special permits are granted to individuals who desire to import items for personal use. Contractors importing equipment and supplies related to public contracts can obtain a special tax-free exemption from the Ministry of Economy and Finance.

E. CUSTOMS REGULATIONS AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Customs taxes in Cameroon are levied on the CIF value of the imported goods. Customs fraud is endemic in Cameroon, and protracted negotiations are common with customs officers over the value of imported goods not subject to SGS valuation. For the purpose of determining the value of goods that are subject to import tariffs, the prevailing practice is to value the goods at the list prices in the country of origin and include the cost of freight to Douala.

Mr. Antoine Manga is the Director of Customs; his telephone is (237) 42.32.02. However, the best alternative would be to contact SGS Control Services, Inc., 42 Broadway, New York, New York 10004 (212/482-8700; Fax: 212/224-9122). A list of SGS field offices in the United States can be obtained from that office.

F. TEMPORARY GOODS ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Temporary admission has been scaled down to include only a few large importers wishing to sell on the Cameroonian market. A maximum of one year is allowed for storage, and a security bond is usually required. Storage fees are assessed from the date of landing. The importer pays customs duties on each batch of goods removed from storage until the entire stock is cleared. The Government provides warehouses for temporary admission. Some large importers and freight forwarding companies also operate government-supervised warehouses for temporary admission.

Goods in transit to the landlocked countries of Chad, the Central African Republic and the Republic of Congo (Congo-Brazzaville) are stored in the freight forwarder's warehouse, and an amount equal to the value of assessed import tax is held by customs as a guarantee. The guarantee is released when the goods are removed from the warehouse for onward delivery to their destinations. SGS has initiated a new control to verify that goods destined for trans-shipment are indeed delivered, since they are free of duty.

G. SPECIAL IMPORT/EXPORT REQUIREMENTS, CERTIFICATIONS AND EXPORT CONTROLS

Cameroonian customs officials require a commercial invoice and a bill of lading (or airway bill) for all goods entering the country. Shipping marks and numbers on bills of lading should correspond exactly with those on the invoices and on the goods. Three copies of invoices are requested for surface shipments and four copies for air shipments. In addition, the Cameroonian importer has to present an import license, permit or exception. Documentation on bank transactions concerning the specific delivery is required only if the value of the imported goods is over two million CFA francs (USD 3,333). Certificates of non-infestation, delivered by the appropriate authority in the country of origin, are also required for certain imports such as used clothing. A pre-shipment inspection certificate and the Bill of Clean Findings, delivered by SGS is required for shipments valued over two million CFA francs (FOB).

The Government of the Republic of Cameroon eliminated its most onerous export licensing requirement as of July 1, 1994 by deregulating the export of cocoa, coffee and cotton. Coffee and cocoa exports must still obtain a quality grade certification. In August 1997, the GOVERNMENT licensed Société Générale de Surveillance (SGS), La Cordeler Cameroun, SA and L'Observatoire Camerounais de la Qualite (OCQ) to control the quality of Cameroonian coffee and cocoa prior to exportation. Licenses are also required for "strategic" products such as gold and diamonds and for ecologically sensitive items (governed by the CITES Convention) such as live animals, birds and medicinal plants. In January 1998, the GOVERNMENT removed petroleum and hydrocarbons from the list of sensitive products subjected to prior price assessment procedures.

In order to support the competitiveness of its agricultural products, the GOVERNMENT eliminated in its FY2000 Financial Law export taxes on eight agro-industrial products: bananas, cocoa, coffee, cotton, rubber, sugar, palm oil and medicinal plants.

H. LABELING REQUIREMENTS

Labeling and packaging requirements for canned products destined for Cameroon should have the manufacture and the expiration dates engraved or stamped on top of the container or packaging in clearly legible indelible ink. Dates should be preceded by short comments in French and/or English: "made in" and "to be consumed before." It is recommended that the label, written in both French and English, carry the following inscriptions: country of origin, the name and address of the manufacturer, the product name, the weight (metric system), and all

ingredients, including salt. It is compulsory to prelabel cigarettes that are to be sold in Cameroon. This label, in the form of a fiscal stamp, must theoretically be prepaid by an importer of cigarettes months before the shipment is made.

Cameroon has granted a contract to SGS to inspect the quality of goods imported in the country. U.S. exporters interested in doing business with Cameroon may also wish to contact SGS for further information on shipping food items into the country.

I. FREE TRADE ZONES/WAREHOUSES

Cameroon's Industrial Free Zone (IFZ) regime is production and export oriented. Only 20 percent of goods produced by enterprises based in the zones can be sold on the Cameroonian market. The GOVERNMENT has discontinued granting authorizations to investors seeking the free zone regime, pending completion of an audit of past operations. Faced with possible law suits by enterprises previously granted free zone status, the government of Cameroon released the suspension for those units in late 1999. The actual status of the Industrial Free Zone is unclear pending issuance of a new investment charter scheduled for 2000. There are no free trade warehouses in Cameroon.

J. WARRANTY AND NON-WARRANTY REPAIRS

General conditions on warranty repairs are applicable in Cameroon. Parties to a transaction can also decide whether to fix the item locally and obtain a cash rebate on subsequent orders or send the item back at the supplier's expense to have it fixed.

K. STANDARDS

The Department of Price Control, Weights and Measures is responsible for standards administration in Cameroon, but its impact has so far been felt mainly on price controls. The metric system is the official standard of weights and measures. The standard electric current used in Cameroon is AC, 50 cycles, 220-380 volts, but there are regional variations to that norm. Television operates on the PAL standard. Cameroon transformed its telecommunications system from analog to digital technology in the main cities of Douala, Yaounde and Bafoussam. A cellular phone service was launched in July 1993 to cover a limited geographical area, and a second cellular phone license was also recently granted to a French company. The two private companies operate on the GSM standard. While both English and French are official languages in Cameroon,

French is essential to successful business transactions. The English-speaking part of the country constitutes only 20 percent of the population.

CHAPTER VII INVESTMENT CLIMATE

A. OPENNESS TO FOREIGN INVESTMENT

The Cameroonian Government wants to attract investment from international corporations and individuals to spur Cameroon's economy. The law governing investments in Cameroon is the 1990 investment code which is attractive on paper. Its incentives are identical for foreign and domestic investors and provide 14 basic guarantees to investors, including property ownership, ability to repatriate capital and income, prior compensation in case of expropriation, freedom of movement within Cameroon and free egress for personnel. However, the code's application has been perverted by arbitrary application in the administration and courts as well as 1994 tax changes which have annulled all the tax benefits arising from some special investment schedules. The 1990 code is being rewritten and will be renamed the investment charter. The charter may include provisions consecrating trade preferences aimed at increasing trade flows within the Central African Economic and Monetary Community (CEMAC) region.

General benefits of the investment code are available to all new and existing enterprises in Cameroon which process goods for export or use inputs from the local or regional markets of CEMAC. In addition to these general benefits, firms may qualify for one of five special investment formulae which offer more advantages. The five formulae are 1) the basic regime; 2) the small and medium-size enterprise regime; 3) the strategic enterprise regime; 4) the reinvestment regime and 5) the free zone regime. The code sets out in detail the specific criteria a firm must meet to qualify for each regime as well as the benefits accorded thereunder.

Foreign investment is not screened, and foreign equity ownership is subject to limitation only in the small and medium size enterprise regime (see section e below). Programs financed jointly by international financial institutions (IFIs) and the government are open to unrestricted competition. Cameroon is privatizing some state companies which will eliminate public-sector monopolies within the next two years. Except for the aluminum sector, foreign firms may not invest directly in ventures defined as "strategic" by the government of Cameroon, but they may provide equipment and services to the parastatals that have jurisdiction

over such activity. Buyers of some privatized former state monopolies enjoy concessions which limit the entry of competitors into the sector for specified periods. The government has revised exploration codes for the hydrocarbons and forestry sectors. It is presently developing a code for industrial mining exploitation which will replace a 1964 version and should be ready by the end of 2000.

Cameroon has a special preference agreement with France, which has only recently been implemented. The convention, also applicable in the other former French colonies in Africa, accords several advantages to French companies which maintain branches or agents in Cameroon. Among the advantages are exemptions from the 15 percent special tax applicable to other enterprises operating in Cameroon and tax deductions for "technical assistance" costs.

A. 2. CONVERSION AND TRANSFER POLICIES

The Communauté Financière Africaine (CFA) franc is the common currency Cameroon shares with fourteen other African member states of the CFA zone. The French treasury ensures convertibility of the CFA franc into French francs, the CFA franc is pegged to the French franc. In 1994, the exchange rate parity was reduced by 50 percent to a fixed parity of 100 CFA francs to one French franc. Since late 1993, Central African CFA bank notes are no longer accepted in the eight countries that use the currency of the West African CFA.

The regional central bank (BEAC) no longer allows the purchase of CFA notes abroad; travelers from Cameroon may carry a maximum of only 20,000 CFA francs (about USD 35) out of the country without prior authorization. Travelers' checks can be drawn on any available foreign currency, but the ministry of economy and finance (MINEFI) authorizes such purchases. No ceilings have yet been placed on how much foreign currency can be purchased per trip. The authorization of MINEFI is required for foreign exchange business transfers. These authorizations are routinely granted if they conform to the specified incentives of the investment and fiscal codes. Dividends, return of capital, interest and principal on foreign debt, lease payments, royalties and management fees, returns on liquidation, etc., can all be remitted abroad. It takes an average of 12 days to obtain a foreign exchange transfer authorization.

A. 3. EXPROPRIATION AND COMPENSATION

Foreign and domestic investors receive legal guarantees that substantially comply with international norms, including full and prior compensation, in the event of expropriation in the public interest. There are no confiscatory tax regimes or laws that could be considered detrimental to American or other investments. Undeveloped land is more at risk for local expropriation than developed property; Cameroonian law does not require local ownership of land.

A. 4. DISPUTE SETTLEMENT INCLUDING ENFORCEMENT OF FOREIGN ARBITRAL AWARDS

The Cameroon investment code provides for dispute resolution. At the time of incorporation or application for investment code benefits, a firm may opt for one of the various procedures to settle future conflicts. A limited number of investment disputes has come to the attention of the U.S. Embassy. These often involve taxation questions and in one instance, local business partners stole an American investor's equipment.

Foreign investors, including some U.S. firms, have found it difficult to obtain enforcement of their legal rights, including contract and property claims, through the Cameroonian judicial system. Local business practice includes routinely exerting, or attempting to exert, pressure on the courts which may sometimes be swayed by a large bribe or by the high status of a political heavyweight. In addition, many foreign companies allege that judgments against them were obtained fraudulently or as the result of frivolous lawsuits. The execution of judgments is slow and fraught with administrative and legal bottlenecks. The United Nations development program has developed with the Cameroonian government a governance reform program which includes proposed measures to improve performance of Cameroon's courts. The program received final government approval in June 2000.

Cameroon's bankruptcy law is an integral part of its commercial law. In case of bankruptcy, creditors are not covered except by way of negotiable or enforceable guarantee instruments held by the creditor. Cameroon accepts binding international arbitration of investment disputes between foreign investors and the state. Cameroon is a member of the international center for the settlement of investment disputes (ICSID), and is a signatory to the Convention on the Recognition and Enforcement of Foreign Arbitrage Awards. In May 1997, the Council of Business Managers and Professional Associations (GICAM), an association of 140 enterprises and 15 professional associations representing 70 percent of all formal sector business activity in the country, voted to constitute its

own arbitration center to which business cases can be submitted. On 1 January 1998, the Treaty for the Organization to harmonize business laws in Africa (OHADA) between the 15 states of the CFA franc zone plus Guinea entered into force. The treaty is designed to promote the development of an African economic community, the institution of a common business policy and the guarantee of judicial security and compatibility within that community. Through its regional judiciary in Abidjan, objectivity should be reinforced as the treaty is implemented with the assistance of the council of French investors in Africa.

A. 5. PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS/INCENTIVES

Cameroon's 1990 investment code establishes requirements for at least 35 percent Cameroonian equity ownership for enterprises under the small and medium-size enterprise regime. Even in such instances, foreign investors are not required to reduce their shares over time. Under the investment code, an industrial free zone investor can operate virtually outside of the jurisdiction of the country's established legal and regulatory systems; there are no requirements for technology transfer, no requirements to locate in specific geographical areas and foreign exchange privileges are not rationed. Investors can transfer dividends, return of capital, interest and capital on foreign debt, lease payments, royalties and management fees, returns on liquidation, etc. The Ministry of Finance routinely authorizes such business remittances and foreign investors may seek local financing for investment purposes.

The investment code has general employment requirements relative to the amount of invested capital. It also links benefits and incentives to the volume of exported goods and to the use of inputs purchased from the local or CEMAC markets. Each of the five special regimes of the code has its own specific eligibility and performance requirements and accompanying benefits. Such benefits vary in duration from three to twelve years depending on the regime and on whether the investment is classified "start-up" or "operational." Quantitative restrictions on imports, non-tariff protection, and many import licensing requirements were lifted when the new tariff code was enacted in January, 1994 to conform to central African regional customs regulations. In addition, many other price controls were abolished in 1998 and now remain only on "strategic" goods and services such as electricity, water, public transportation (road/rail), telecommunications, cooking gas, pharmaceuticals, school books, and port-side activities (stevedoring, etc.).

The procedures for enforcement of performance requirements of the investment code are not clearly defined. The government has not made any public statements

concerning performance requirements. Foreign participation in government financed and/or subsidized research and development programs, is restricted to programs which are beyond the technical capacity of Cameroonian firms. Visa, residence and work permit requirements do not particularly inhibit foreign investors.

A. 6. RIGHT TO PRIVATE OWNERSHIP AND ESTABLISHMENT

The government recognizes the right of private ownership, but a dysfunctional judiciary, inadequate definitions of property rights and widespread inconsistencies in government decision making can limit property rights in practice. Foreign and domestic individuals and firms are legally entitled to establish and own firms, engage in remunerative activities, and establish, acquire and dispose of interests in business enterprises. The law also permits investors to dispose of their property via sale, transfer or physical repatriation of moveable property.

A. 7. PROTECTION OF PROPERTY RIGHTS

Secured interests in property are recognized and basically enforced. The concept of mortgage (or "hypothèque" in French) exists in Cameroonian law and the title or "titre foncier" is the legal instrument for registering such security interests. Foreign and domestic investors are provided with guarantees that substantially comply with international norms. Cameroonian law does not discriminate between foreign and domestic firms. In practice, however, Cameroonian courts and administrative agencies often grant preferential treatment to domestic firms and have sometimes been accused of corrupt practices.

Cameroon is the headquarters for the 14-nation West African intellectual property organization, Organisation Africaine de la Propriété Intellectuelle (OAPI). OAPI is a member of the World Intellectual Property Organization. In cooperation with member states, OAPI offers registration for patents and trademarks. Patents in Cameroon have an initial validity of ten years. They can be renewed every five years upon submission of proof that the patent was used in at least one of the 14 member countries of the OAPI. In the absence of use, compulsory licensing is possible after three years. Trademark protection is initially valid for 20 years with renewal possibilities every 10 years. Trademark enforcement in Cameroon is weak due to the small size of the domestic market and the costs of enforcement.

Cameroon is also a party to the Paris Convention on Industrial Property and the Universal Copyright Convention. A licensed copyright company, the Societe

Civile Nationale des Droits d'Auteurs (SOCINADA), registers copyrights for all types of publications, including music, books and periodicals, paintings, theatrical productions, etc. Officially, SOCINADA cooperates with copyright protection agencies in other countries. Steps to implement the world trade organization's TRIPS agreement are being undertaken through an inter-ministerial technical committee.

A. 8. TRANSPARENCY OF REGULATORY SYSTEM

While Cameroonian business laws on paper are clear, few foreign investors have come forward because implementation of those laws is problematic. Under the current judicial system, local and foreign investors, including some U.S. firms, have found it complicated and costly to enforce contract rights, protect property rights, obtain a fair and expeditious hearing before the courts or defend themselves against frivolous lawsuits. However, the recently implemented "Organisation pour l'Harmonisation du Droit des Affaires en Afrique" (OHADA) treaty may foster improvements in the judiciary.

Several American companies, and Cameroonian firms, complained in late 1999 and early 2000 about onerous new tax audits and harsh government efforts to compel companies to agree to compromise on tax assessments, including blocking company bank accounts for temporary periods.

A. 9. EFFICIENT CAPITAL MARKETS AND PORTFOLIO INVESTMENTS

Interest rates are set by the regional central bank (BEAC), which is closely monitored and regulated by the French government. Foreign investors are able to obtain credit on the local market, but usually borrow offshore due to high domestic interest rates. Cameroon's legal and regulatory systems are inefficient and often arbitrary, and the government has not yet established a regulatory system to protect and encourage high-risk portfolio investments. Cameroonian partners of foreign firms have occasionally attempted to take over the operations of local companies via court action or through harassment and intimidation by government officials.

Cameroon is expected to start operation of its stock exchange in Douala, before the end of year 2000. Rivalry between neighboring countries has prevented designation of the site of the future regional securities exchange, such as the one recently established in Abidjan, although the exchange is supposed to become

operational is November 2000. Banque Nationale de Paris has drawn up a model for a small screen based securities market for the Central African franc zone.

Mergers and take-overs are currently undertaken discreetly through negotiations. The more than six privatization laws have been described as some of the most complete on the books, but criticized for the heavily bureaucratic process they put in place.

Restructuring of the financial system began in 1986 and is now considered complete. At the end of February 1999, Cameroon's banking system had ten functioning commercial banks with sixty branches. Commercial banks constitute the largest part of the financial sector. The three institutions that dominate the sector represent more than 60 percent of total bank assets. The ratio of provision for doubtful loans is low and much of the total asset base of the banks is estimated as non-performing. In order to further secure the banking system, a sub regional deposit guarantee fund covering all CEMAC countries, FOGADAC, was created. Cameroon took part in its creation by a presidential decree signed on April 20, 1999. Private firms are free to associate with any partner they choose and in whatever percentage participation they negotiate with such partners. Companies are also free to organize into industry associations.

A. 10. POLITICAL VIOLENCE

There have only been a few incidents of politically motivated civil disturbance or violence during the past few years. Most of these disturbances have been a direct result of the government's poor human rights record. There is a small English-speaking separatist movement but it has not resorted to violence against foreign interests. There is a border dispute with Nigeria over the Bakassi peninsula and the armies of both countries remain mobilized in this region. On rare occasions tensions break out into brief, isolated firefights.

A. 11. CORRUPTION

Corruption is endemic in Cameroon. The government launched several public campaigns in 1998 to combat corruption and promote good governance. A dysfunctional judicial system severely disrupts development of Cameroon's economy and society. Persons accused of corruption by the local press are seldom called to account before the courts. The government has not signed the OECD convention on combating bribery.

The government has taken some steps to address the corruption problem. Recipients of government payments are no longer routinely obliged to relinquish 30 percent of the sum to the civil servants who process their vouchers, although some still attempt to apply the measure. Corruption at customs reportedly diminished after February 1996 when a private company, Societe Generale de Surveillance (SGS), was given an exclusive contract to verify and assess customs duties due for fob imports valued over USD 3,333. Senior officials, including the Prime Minister, publicly pledged the government would step up its anti-corruption efforts in FY 2000/2001.

B. Bilateral investment agreements

Cameroon has bilateral investment and/or commercial agreements with the following countries: Austria, Belgium, Canada, China, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Japan, Russia, South Korea, Spain, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Similar agreements also exist with other countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and Eastern Europe. The bilateral investment agreement between Cameroon and the United States was ratified in 1986 and entered into force in 1989. While the original time frame for the agreement was 10 years, tacitly it was renewed. The U.S. invoked the bit in one case in 1997 and Cameroon has ostensibly acquiesced in the case through non-implementation of legislation contrary to the treaty.

C. OPIC AND OTHER INVESTMENT INSURANCE PROGRAMS

The U.S. government signed an investment guarantee agreement with Cameroon in 1967. OPIC has been receptive to American firms seeking war, expropriation and inconvertibility insurance and has guaranteed several ventures in Cameroon. OPIC programs are available for projects in Cameroon. The existing Cameroon investment code guarantees protection from non-commercial risk as per the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA) treaty with Cameroon.

D. LABOR

Cameroon's labor-management relations are governed by the labor code enacted in 1992. The code restores collective bargaining and employee-employer primacy in the negotiation of wages; eliminates fixed zonal wage scales; abolishes employment by level of education; eliminates government control over layoffs and firings; and reduces government involvement in the management of labor unions. The code, however, does not apply to civil servants, employees of the

penal system, or workers responsible for national security. Its implementing decrees were completed in 1993, but remain open to legal interpretation. Labor disputes are still common. Cameroon is a party to the ILO Convention on the Protection of Labor Rights, but government adherence to some of its provisions was seriously questioned in April 1994 when the administration interfered in the functioning of the confederation of Cameroon trade unions (in French, CSTC) through the ousting of its elected leader. After the democratically elected leader was restored to his post by an extraordinary CSTC congress, the government supported establishment of a competing confederation of free Cameroonian trade unions (in French, USLC), headed by a former CSTC vice president. The ILO notes that the government has failed since 1991 to recognize the national union of teachers of higher education. The CSTC is a member of the Organization of African Trade Union Unity (OATUU) and the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU).

American companies note that under Cameroonian labor law, an individual who wants to raise a case of unfair discrimination may bring the case in the town where he resides, not where he works. In practice this can compel the company to dispatch officials to sometimes-distant locales where the individual may have better local contacts than the company.

The 1992 code provides a legal framework for the emergence of a flexible and efficient labor market, in theory, but such a market has not yet been allowed to operate. Cameroon has a high literacy rate and offers a relatively well-educated labor force, yet unemployment has been estimated at between 30 and 35 percent in the two major cities of Douala and Yaounde. There is a large surplus of unskilled and non-technical labor. Many Cameroonians speak both French and English. However, due to inadequate mechanical and technical training, some industries have experienced difficulties in recruiting skilled labor on the domestic market.

E. FOREIGN TRADE ZONES/FREE PORTS

Cameroon has no foreign trade zones or free ports at this time but it has an industrial free zone (IFZ) regime which is applicable to all locations through “industrial park” or “single-factory” zones. This was created in 1990 to promote internationally competitive export industries. It creates conditions for the IFZ investor to operate virtually outside of the jurisdiction of the country's established legal and regulatory systems. The only eligibility requirements to qualify for IFZ status are production of goods or services at least 80 percent of which are export-

bound and which do not have deleterious effects on the environment. The National Office for Industrial Free Zones (NOFIZ) is the non-profit regulatory body established to oversee and administer Cameroon's IFZ program. IFZ firms receive a 10-year exemption from taxes and are subject only to a flat tax of 15 percent on corporate profits beginning in the eleventh year. They have a right to tax-free repatriation of all funds earned and invested in Cameroon, and are exempt from foreign exchange regulations. They are exempt also from existing and future customs duties and taxes including those on locally purchased production inputs. The licensing process was suspended in 1996, pending an audit of past operations. Faced with possible lawsuits by enterprises previously granted free zone status, the government of Cameroon released the suspension for those companies only in late 1999. While awaiting the publication of the new investment charter, the actual status of the industrial free zone is unclear.

F. FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT STATISTICS

Direct foreign investment (DFI) plays a key role in the Cameroonian economy. However, neither the government nor the chamber of commerce has compiled a comprehensive list of foreign investments in Cameroon or estimated of current values. Flow data on DFI, disaggregated by country, is not available and there are no statistics on Cameroon's direct investment abroad. According to IMF data, foreign direct investment was CFA franc 53 billion (U.S. dollars 90 million) in Cameroonian fiscal year 1996/97, about one percent of GDP. The figure has likely increased in more recent years due to the government's privatization program and the upcoming Chad-Cameroon oil pipeline will represent a substantial increase in the years ahead.

France is the most important foreign investor in Cameroon. The French firm Pechiney has long owned a majority stake in ALUCAM, a large aluminum plant outside of Douala, Cameroon's commercial capital. A French banking company in 2000 bought Cameroon's last state-owned bank, and French interests bought a state-owned sugar production plant in 1998. A French telecommunications firm in 1999 won a license to establish a mobile telephone company. South African firms bought majority shares of the privatized national railroad in 1998 and the state-owned mobile telephone company in 1999. The commonwealth Development Corporation has investments in some Cameroonian agro-business and industrial ventures. It may participate in debt for equity swaps to reactivate its investment program. In recent years, china constructed a tractor assembly plant in the south and has built a tire retreading plant in Douala.

U.S. direct foreign investment in Cameroon is significant. Shell north American has an offshore production sites. Mobil and Texaco have networks to retail refined petroleum products, dole and Del Monte have shares in operations producing bananas for export and Colgate-Palmolive produces oral care/hygiene products for the local as well as regional market of central Africa from its Cameroon plant. Launch of the Chad-Cameroon pipeline will represent a substantial new U.S. investment of about \$1.5 billion in Cameroon alone. Several dozen U.S. companies are currently represented in Cameroon either directly or through agents or distributors.

VIII. TRADE AND PROJECT FINANCING

A. DESCRIPTION OF THE BANKING SYSTEM

The Banque des Etats de l'Afrique Centrale (BEAC), a multilateral central bank also serving the five other member countries of the Central African sub-region, oversees Cameroon's banking system. The French Treasury in turn works closely with the BEAC. In 1993, member states of BEAC created a supranational supervisory authority, COBAC (Commission Bancaire de l'Afrique Centrale), over all banking and finance institutions in the Central African CEMAC sub-region and granted it extensive powers to discipline delinquent institutions. In order to further secure the banking system, a sub regional deposit guarantee fund covering CEMAC countries was created in April 1999.

Like all other signatories to a 1948 agreement creating the Communauté Financière Africaine franc zone, Cameroon is obliged to hold at least 60 percent of its foreign reserves in an account ("compte d'opération") that is supervised and managed in Paris by the French Treasury. This account is the principal means by which France guarantees the exchange of CFA francs into French francs at a fixed exchange rate (1 FF = 100 CFA). The introduction of the Euro currency in early 1999, expanded even further the convertibility of the CFA franc. Lending/borrowing base rates are set by the BEAC.

Cameroon's banking system is currently has ten full-service commercial banks with 60 branches. The return of a U.S. bank operation to Cameroon in 1998 has facilitated and improved financial transactions between the U.S. and Cameroon. After more than a decade of bank restructuring, Cameroon's banking system is more solid. The banking system is still plagued, however, by the unwillingness of

many bankers to take risks and assess good venture, by the lack of modern banking products and the generally poor quality of service.

B. FOREIGN EXCHANGE CONTROLS AFFECTING TRADE

Foreign exchange controls exist in Cameroon primarily for statistical purposes and to enable the Ministry of Finance to certify that remittances conform with established regulations. Authorizations for foreign transfers are routinely granted. Foreign exchange rationing is not practiced in Cameroon.

C. GENERAL AVAILABILITY OF FINANCING

Importers and exporters use internationally accepted methods of settlement. Local sources of commercial credit are extremely limited; therefore, liberal credit terms may in fact outweigh a considerable price differential. Nevertheless, due to pervasive credit risk extending even to the banking and public sectors, many U.S. firms exporting to Cameroon find it prudent to insist on irrevocable, confirmed letters of credit drawn on banks with strong foreign correspondents. Foreign competition often grants credits of 180 days for consumer goods and 24 months for small machinery and equipment. European banks often quote liberal terms and may discount paper for their exporters who are pursuing long-term credits.

Since 1999 Cameroon has been eligible for USDA GSM credit guarantee. Efforts to certify a local bank to use the program are ongoing.

D. HOW TO FINANCE EXPORTS/METHODS OF PAYMENT

Due to pervasive credit risk, extending even to the banking and public sectors, many U.S. firms exporting to Cameroon find it prudent to insist on irrevocable letters of credit drawn on banks with strong foreign correspondents. The return of a U.S. bank operation to Cameroon in 1998 has facilitated and improved financial transactions between the U.S. and Cameroon.

E. TYPES OF AVAILABLE EXPORT FINANCING AND INSURANCE

Foreign investors can obtain local financing for investment and trade purposes at non-discriminatory terms. However, as a result of Cameroon's comparatively high interest rates, most investors prefer to borrow from foreign sources. The U.S. Export-Import Bank has stepped up its effort to help U.S. exporters land markets in Africa. U.S. exporters or Cameroonian buyers of U.S. goods can apply

for EX-IM bank financing under the short and medium-term private sector financing program. A pilot project to include the public sector in Cameroon is also in effect.

F. AVAILABILITY OF PROJECT FINANCING

Multilateral financial institutions have long been active in project financing in Cameroon. The World Bank has a resident representative in Yaounde, and its affiliate, the International Finance Corporation (IFC), maintains regional offices in Douala for borrowers in Central Africa. The African Development Bank (AfDB) Group involvement in Cameroon started in 1972 and has thus far financed more than 30 projects valued at over USD 700 million. In February 2000, TDA granted the Government of Cameroon USD 280,000 for feasibility studies related to the construction of a deep-sea port in Limbe, and the modernization of airport safety infrastructure.

G. TYPES OF PROJECTS RECEIVING FINANCING SUPPORT

AfDB closed its Cameroon office when the country moved to the status of being qualified only for concessional resources. Vigorous efforts to initiate a new Cameroon program, particularly through AfDB's Private Sector Unit, are underway. Cameroon received from the African Development Fund two loans (for poverty alleviation and support for the ESAF program—USD 38 million) and three aid packages (for rural electrification and potable water—USD 41 million) in early 1998. Currently, consideration is being given to a national agricultural research and extension (UA 8.97 million) project. These institutions have financed projects in the public and private sectors including agricultural and industrial projects.

H. LIST OF BANKS WITH CORRESPONDENT U.S. BANKING ARRANGEMENTS

The following eight of Cameroon's ten commercial banks have U.S. correspondents. The Highland Corporation Bank's approval to operate as a full bank is still under consideration by COBAC.

Amity Bank: Citibank, New York, and Bankers Trust, New York.
Banque Internationale du Cameroun pour l'Epargne et le Cr dit (BICEC):
Citibank, New York. Caisse Commune d'Epargne et d'Investissement (CCEI):
Republic National Bank, New York, and Citibank, New York.

Commercial Bank of Cameroon: Credit Commerical de France, New York, New York

Citibank: Citibank, New York.

Societe Commerciale de Banque Credit-Lyonnnais (SCB-CL): Credit-Lyonnnais, New York.

Societe Generale de Banque au Cameroun (SGBC): Societe Generale, New York.

Standard Chartered Bank: Standard Chartered Bank, New York

Union Bank of Cameroon had been authorized to operate only this year, and is yet to set up its offices.

Citibank- Cameroon

Contact: Louis Adande, GM

P.O. Box 4571

Douala, Cameroon

Tel: (237) 42-42-72

Fax: (237) 42-40-74

International Finance Corporation (IFC)

Mr. Mahamadou Diop, Regional Representative

96, rue Flatters

B.P. 4616

Douala, Cameroon

Tel: (237) 42-80-33/42/94-51

Fax: (237) 42-80-14

IX. BUSINESS TRAVEL

U.S. Business travelers are encouraged to obtain a copy of the “Key Officers Of Foreign Service Posts: Guide For Business Representatives” available for sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402; Tel: (202) 512-1800; Fax: (202) 512-2250. Business Travelers to Cameroon seeking appointments with U.S. Embassy Yaounde officials should contact the Political/Economic/Commercial section in advance. The Economic/Commercial section can be reached by telephone at: (237) 23-4014 or (237) 22-25-89; Fax: (237) 23-07-53.

A. BUSINESS CUSTOMS

Although Cameroon has the largest private sector in French-speaking Central Africa, its business community does not have a fixed western pattern of behavior. Cameroonians appreciate an opportunity to "get to know" a potential partner before beginning concrete discussions. It is helpful in Cameroon to supplement written communications with as many face-to-face encounters as possible. Adherence to western standards of punctuality is not the norm; patience and persistence are needed to do business in Cameroon. Mitigation of culture and language barriers may be addressed by a visit to the American Business Services Centers of the Embassy.

B. TRAVEL ADVISORY AND VISA

Visas and return tickets are required for entry into Cameroon. Visas can be obtained from the Cameroonian Embassy in the U.S. (2349 Massachusetts Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008, tel. 202-265-8790) and in France (17 bis, rue Longchamps, Paris 75016). Visitors who arrive without a visa may be required to leave the country on the next available flight, particularly if they are coming from a country where there is a Cameroonian Embassy. For passengers arriving from countries without Cameroonian diplomatic representation, airport visas are usually available. In May 2000, the Prime Minister signed a waiver for tourists travelling in groups to be granted admission upon arrival at any Cameroon airport.

Americans considering travel to Cameroon are urged to consult the Department of State's latest Consular Information Sheet (CIS) for Cameroon. The CIS, which is updated periodically, may be obtained by calling the State Department's Citizen's Emergency Center at (202) 647-5225 or (202) 647-0900. Business travelers can also consult the Department of State's Web site: (<http://travel.state.gov>) for Cameroon. American citizens residing in Cameroon are urged to register with the Consular Section of the American Embassy in Yaounde.

C. HOLIDAYS

The following Cameroonian national holidays are scheduled on fixed calendar days: January 1 (New Year's Day), February 11 (Youth Day), May 1 (Labor Day), May 20 (National Day) and December 25 (Christmas Day). Cameroon's Christian holidays fall on different dates of the year and include Good Friday, Ascension Day and Assumption Day. Muslim holidays falling on unspecified calendar days include Ramadan and Tabaski. Holidays falling on Sundays are observed on Mondays. When a working day intervenes between two recognized

holidays, the working day is almost always declared a public holiday. Sunday is the only weekday considered officially as a non-working day.

D. WORK WEEK

The Cameroonian workweek is generally Monday through Friday, 7:30 am to 3:30 PM with a half-hour break between 12:00 noon and 1:00 PM. The Cameroonian workweek does not include Saturdays even though businesses are open that day. Government offices are officially open from 7:30 am to 3:30 PM without interruption. Businesses generally are open from 8 am to 6 PM with a brief closing for lunch.

E. BUSINESS INFRASTRUCTURE

Good roads connect Cameroon's southern cities. Its main business centers, Yaounde and Douala, are easily accessible from Bamenda (North West Province) and Bafoussam (West Province) and from Cameroon's two main seaside towns of Kribi and Limbe. A paved 510-kilometer road links the three major northern cities of Ngaoundere, Garoua and Maroua to each other, but they are cut off from the southern cities by long stretches of unpaved road. Regular bus service is available between Yaounde, Douala, Limbe, Bafoussam and Bamenda, but comfort is often minimal. As accidents are frequent, bus travel, especially at night, should be avoided when possible. Car rental is available in Douala, Yaounde, Ngaoundere and Garoua. Visitors to most of the country's towns and cities can also hire taxicabs.

Cameroon's railway and airline service links the southern and northern zones at a northern terminal in Ngaoundere. Railway service between Douala and Yaounde has deteriorated, and delays and derailments are common. Cameroon National Railways Authority (REGIFERCAM) was privatized and in early 1999, and CAMRAIL, a French-South African consortium, took over giving hope that the service will improve in the coming years. But so far no improvement has taken place. Air flights are available, if unreliable, between Douala, Yaounde, Ngaoundere, Garoua and Maroua. There are three carriers for in-country service, Cameroon Airlines (CAMAIR), the national carrier, National Airways Corporations (NAC) a South -African Cameroonian joint venture, and a charter company, Air Affaires Afrique (AAA). . NAC lines includes Yaounde-Douala, Bertoua (East Province), Ngaoundere (Adamaoua Province) and also offers charters. The Cameroonian Government's open skies initiative has raised hopes of increased competition in the air service. One last company holds a license to

operate but is currently only doing aerial spraying. Delays, cancellations and overbooking are common on CAMAIR flights. Passengers should arrive at the airport early to improve their chances of receiving a boarding pass. Cameroon imposes an airport departure tax of 15,000 CFA francs (USD 22.00) for international flights and 500 CFA francs for domestic legs.

French is the dominant business language in Cameroon although approximately 20 percent of the population and much of the business community speak English, Cameroon's other official language. English can also be used in the two English-speaking provinces and the larger cities. Pidgin is a local lingua franca in half of the provinces of Cameroon. The staffs of major hotels and restaurants are usually bilingual. Several hotels of international standing operate in Douala and Yaounde.

There are many restaurants in Douala and Yaounde that serve a variety of cuisines including Cameroonian, French, Chinese, Italian, Lebanese, Cambodian, Vietnamese, Indian and Japanese. Special precaution should be taken by American visitors to drink only bottled or boiled (and filtered) water in restaurants and hotels. A number of European and American credit cards are accepted in many restaurants and hotels in Douala and Yaounde, but generally cash is required. To the Embassy knowledge, there are no accommodations in Cameroon likely to assist a traveler in getting cash upon presentation of a credit card.

All visitors entering Cameroon are required to present evidence of a yellow fever vaccination received within the last ten years on a valid World Health Organization (WHO) international health immunization certificate. The certificate must be presented upon arrival and departure from Cameroon. Medical evacuation insurance is recommended for all travelers visiting Cameroon. Vaccinations against tetanus, typhoid, polio, meningitis, and hepatitis A and B are recommended. Cameroon has chloroquine- and fansidar-resistant malaria. Americans are urged to take appropriate malaria prophylactic medication and to use insect repellents.

Cameroon and the United States have a direct telephone link via satellite. The country code for Cameroon is (237). All telephone numbers have six digits, and there are no city or area codes. Cameroon has fax and telex services, and it was the first country in Central Africa to launch a cellular phone service in 1993. Currently, there are two private cellular companies operating in Cameroon, Mobilis (French) and MTN (South African). Internet service was established in

Cameroon in 1997, and there are now Internet cafes in Douala and Yaounde, as listed in Chapter XI.

Many streets in Cameroon do not have names or numbered addresses. Consequently, most businesses, hotels, restaurants, government offices and individuals do not have street addresses. Mail is generally sent to a "boite postale" (B.P.) or post office box (P.O. Box). International Organizations and renowned private businesses often use express mail services (including Federal Express and DHL Worldwide Express representative), despite the greater cost.

Villas and houses are available for rent in most towns in Cameroon. Apartments are available for rent in Douala and Yaounde. Rates have dropped considerably since 1992 but are trending upward, particularly in the two main cities. A 3-4 bedroom house in a good neighborhood in Yaounde rents for about \$1,000-\$2,000. While real estate brokers (or "agent immobilier") may help in securing housing for American visitors, a good local contact may be more useful. Many newly arrived U.S. businesspersons establish temporary housing and office space at one of the well-known hotels.

F. TEMPORARY ENTRY OF GOODS

Temporary entry of goods is allowed, provided the traveler can justify that it is a personal effect. In this case, no custom duty would be assessed on the item. The only exception is with the temporary import of a motor vehicle, which follows a pre-established set of procedures. In reality, it is difficult to show that a personal vehicle is a personal effect.

X. ECONOMIC AND TRADE STATISTICS

Cameroon's national income, price, balance of payments, trade and fiscal data became increasingly scant and unreliable in the late 1980s, as the country's data generation systems deteriorated steadily. With help and pressure from the IFIs, the situation is improving, especially in the financial sector, and data reflected below comes from the IFIs and government sources.

APPENDIX A. COUNTRY DATA

Population: 14.9 million (mid-2000 estimate)
Population growth rate: 3 percent (mid-2000 estimate)

Religions: Animist (40 percent), Christian (40 percent), Muslim (20 percent)

Government System: Independent republic, with a strong central government dominated by the President.

Branches: Executive - president (head of state elected for a seven year term, renewable only once) and appointed prime minister (head of government).

Legislative - unicameral National Assembly (180 members); a Senate and Regional Councils are called for under 1996 constitutional amendments which also create a framework for increased judicial independence. At present, the judiciary remains under the executive's Ministry of Justice, and the new legislative institutions remain unfulfilled.

Administrative subdivisions: 10 provinces (to be renamed regions), 56 departments, 276 sub-prefectures.

Languages: English and French (official), more than 250 indigenous African languages and dialects.

APPENDIX B. DOMESTIC ECONOMY

	1998	1999*	2000**
GDP (in billion of USD)	9.3	9.2	9.8
GDP at constant prices growth rate	5.0	4.4	4.2
GDP per capita	638.0	668.4	670.8
Government Spending (% of GDP)	19.1	19.4	N/A
Inflation rate (percent)	3.9	3.1	2.0
Unemployment (estimate)	8%	8%	8%
Foreign Exchange Reserves (USD millions)	10.4	9.0	9.4
Average exchange rate (\$1/CFA)	587.2	620.3	650
Debt Ratio of GDP %	124	N/A	N/A
Foreign Debt (USD millions)	9,048	9,152	N/A
Debt outstanding/Exports	358.8	312.3	N/A
Debt outstanding/GDP %	87.8	87.9	78.7
Debt Paid/Exports	34.4	24.9	26.4
U.S. Military Assistance	0.10	0.125	N/A

Source: IMF, BEAC, and Cameroonian Budget Laws, FY1997/1999-FY2000/2001

APPENDIX C. TRADE

(in millions of USD)

	1997	1998	1999
Total Country Exports (Calendar Year)	2,139	1,679	1,583
Total Country Imports (Calendar Year)	1,566	1,502	1,310
U.S. Exports (Calendar Year)	121	75	37
U.S. Imports (Calendar Year)	57	53	77

Source : Ministry of Economy and Finance, Direction of Accounting and Statistics, U.S. Department of Commerce

APPENDIX D. INVESTMENT STATISTICS

Data on Direct Foreign Investment is not available in Cameroon. The Embassy has no statistics on Cameroonian direct investment abroad. Given the importance of the informal sector in the Cameroonian economy and of the tentativeness of statistics, data in this CCG should be used judiciously.

XI. U.S. AND COUNTRY CONTACTS

APPENDIX E. U.S. AND COUNTRY CONTACTS

The American Business Information Center (ABIC) located in the Embassy in Yaounde is connected by Internet at pol.econ@camnet.com . Through the Department of Commerce's Export Assistance Centers in the United States, the Embassy ABIC, along with the Douala Embassy Branch ABIC, provides a variety of services to assist U.S. firms intending to do business in Cameroon. Services include: Customized Market Analyses (CMAs are in-depth studies of the market for a specific product or service, with analyses of the existing competition and prospective marketing strategies); Agent/Distributor Service (ADSs provide identification, research, and assessment of up to six potential agents or distributors for a product or service) and Gold Key Service (a package of contact services for American business visitors to ensure a productive and efficient visit). The Embassy also offers International Company Profile (ICP) service to verify the bona fides of Cameroonian partners.

In addition, a Regional Counselor for Commercial Affairs of the Foreign Commercial Service located in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire and an Agricultural Attaché of the Foreign Agricultural Service located in Lagos, Nigeria provide expertise to those looking to do business in Cameroon. Country Commercial Guides are available for U.S. exporters from the National Trade Data Bank's CD-ROM or via the Internet. Please contact STAT-USA at 1-800-STAT-USA for more information. Country Commercial Guides can be accessed via the World Wide Web at [HTTP://WWW.STAT-USA.GOV](http://WWW.STAT-USA.GOV) and [HTTP://WWW.STATE.GOV/](http://WWW.STATE.GOV/). They can also be ordered in hard copy or on diskette from the National Technical Information Service (NTIS) at 1-800-553-NTIS.

1. CAMEROON CONTACTS

U. S. EMBASSY TRADE RELATED CONTACTS

United States Embassy - Yaounde

U.S. Department of State
 Washington, D.C. 20521-2520
 Tel. (237) 23-40-14 & (237) 22-25-89
 Fax (237) 23-07-53
 Telex 8223 KN
pol.econ@camnet.com

Local mailing address:

Ambassade des Etats Unis d'Amerique
 Rue Nachtigal
 B.P. 817
 Yaounde, Cameroon

Officials:

Ambassador John M. Yates
 Deputy Chief of Mission Frances T. Jones
 Mr. Robert Ford, Political/Economic Section Chief
 Mr. Jacques R. Goueth, Economic Assistant
 Mr. Jean-Paul Yana, Commercial Assistant

Embassy Branch Office (EBO)

96, rue Flatters
 B.P. 4006
 Douala, Cameroon
 Tel: (237) 42-53-31 & (237) 42-03-03

Fax: (237) 42-77-90

Officials:

Ms. Mary Udoh, Commercial Assistant

BILATERAL BUSINESS COUNCILS

American Business Association (ABA)
c/o PECTEN Cameroon Company
CBC (ex-BIAO) Building, 7th FLOOR
Avenue du General de Gaulle
P.O. Box 2273 Douala, Cameroon
Tel. (237) 42-66-99/42-05-09
Fax. (237) 43-27-23

COUNTRY TRADE OR INDUSTRY ASSOCIATIONS

Chamber of Commerce Industries and Mines (CCIM)
Claude Juimo Monthe, President
P.O. Box 4011
Douala, Cameroon
Tel: (237) 42-28-88/42-36-90

Federation of Small- and Medium-Sized Enterprises (FEPEC)
Mr. Henry Tame Soumedjong, President
P.O. Box 1777
Yaounde, Cameroon
Tel/Fax: (237) 21-67-84

Groupement Inter-Patronal du Cameroun (GICAM)
(Council of Business Managers and Professional Associations)
Mr. Andre Siaka, President
1450 Boulevard de la Liberté
B.P. 829
Douala, Cameroon
Tel: (237) 42.31.41 / 42.64.99
Fax: (237) 43.38.80

Le Syndustriacam (Council of Professional Employers)
Mr. Samuel Kondo, President

17, bvl. de la Liberte
B.P. 673
Douala, Cameroon
Tel: (237) 42-30-58
Fax: (237) 42-56-16

COUNTRY GOVERNMENT OFFICES RELATING TO KEY SECTORS

Fonds National de l'Emploi (FNE)
(National Employment Fund)
Mr. Camille Moute A Bidias, General Manager
P.O. Box 10079
Yaounde, Cameroon
Tel: 237-23-00-62/23-53-40
Fax: 237-23-51-39

Investment Code Management Unit (ICMU)
Ms. Marthe Angeline Minja, Director
P.O. Box 15438
Douala, Cameroon
Tel: 237-42-59-46/43-31-11
Fax: 237-43-30-07

National Committee for Privatization of Public Enterprises
Mr. Aminou Bassoro, President
B.P. 423
Yaounde, Cameroon
Tel: 237-23-51-08
Fax: 237-23-51-08

National Committee for Rehabilitation of Public Enterprises
Mr. Jean-Phillipe Njeck, President
B.P. 423 Yaounde, Cameroon
Tel: 237-22-38-16
Fax: 237-23-51-08

National Hydrocarbon Cooperation (SNH)
Mr. Adolphe Moudiki, General Manager
P.O. Box 955
Yaounde, Cameroon

Tel: 237-20-19-10/20-98-64
Fax: 237-20-98-61

National Office for Industrial Free Zones (NOIFZ)
Mr. Michael Tomdio, Managing Director
P.O. Box 673
Douala, Cameroon
Tel: 237-43-33-43/45
Fax: 237-43-33-17

Societe Nationale d'Investissement (SNI)
(National Investment Office)
Ms. Esther Belibi, General Manager
P.O. Box 423
Yaounde, Cameroon
Tel: 237-23-10-59
Fax: 237-22-39-64

Societe de Recouvrement des Creances du Cameroun (SRC)
(National Loan Recovery Agency)
Mr. Emmanuel Etoundi Oyono, General Director
P.O. Box 11991
Yaounde, Cameroon
Tel: 237-22-09-11/22-37-39
Fax: 237-22-39-64

World Trade Organization Coordinating Committee
Ministry of Industrial and Commercial Development
Mr. D. Zang Ambassa, Secretary General
Yaounde, Cameroon
Tel. (237) 22-00.70
Fax (237) 22-27-04

COUNTRY MARKET RESEARCH FIRMS

Associated Consulting Partners (ACP)
Mr. Francois Bowen Noah, Partner
P.O. Box 7176
Yaounde, Cameroon
Tel/Fax: (237) 20-54-14

Price Waterhouse Coopers (Central Africa)
Mr. Charles Kooh II Associate, Manager
96, rue Flatters
B.P. 1227
Douala, Cameroon
Tel: (237) 42-73-51
Fax: (237) 42-87-32

ERNST & YOUNG
Mr. Jerome Minlend, Director General
B.P. 443
Douala, Cameroon
Tel: (237) 42-89.18 / 42.13.03 / 42.73.68
Fax: (237) 42-13.04

Strategies S.A.
Ms. Kah Walla, Director
B.P. 3940
Douala, Cameroon
Tel: (237) 42-24-34
Fax: (237) 42-47-27

COUNTRY ADVERTISING FIRMS

Cameroon Radio Television (CRTV)
Mr. Gervais Mendo Ze, General Manager
B.P. 1634
Yaoundé, Cameroon
Tel: (237) 20-43-66
Fax: (237) 20-43-40

Cameroon Publi-Expansion (CPE)
B.P. 1399
Yaoundé, Cameroon
Tel: (237) 23-14-50
Fax: (237) 23-14-53

Emerites Design
B.P. 158

Yaoundé, Cameroon
Tel: (237) 23-15-59
Fax: (237) 22-93-64

Ets. 7 Commercial & Culturel
64, ave. J.F. Kennedy
B.P. 5949
Yaoundé, Cameroon
Tel: (237) 22-66-95
Fax: (237) 23-97-94

JBO Connection
Biyem-Assi Ave.
B.P. 1287
Yaoundé, Cameroon
Tel: (237) 31-61-26
Fax: (237) 31-53-14

Media Plus
333, blvd. de l'O.U.A.
B.P. 13719
Yaoundé, Cameroon
Tel: (237) 30-68-32
Fax: (237) 30-66-90

Moody & Smith Advertising and Public Relations
Makini Smith Tchameni, senior Partner
B.P. 3969
Douala, Cameroon
Tel: (237) 29-23-04
Fax: (237) 39-03-47

Particulier
Bastos behind B.A.T.
B.P. 1250
Yaoundé, Cameroon
Tel: (237) 20-70-52/20-98-14
Fax: (237) 20-70-52

Publi-Neon, SARL

41, rue 1046
B.P. 6699
Yaoundé, Cameroon
Tel: (237) 20-72-69
Fax: (237) 20-20-83

Spectrum Cablevision, Ltd. (TV/large mobile video screen advertising)
1672 , av. De Gaulle
B.P. 4883
Douala, Cameroon
Tel: (237) 43-30-45/42-65-27
Fax: (237) 43-30-48

Sup Telecom Services (telephone/internet advertising)
B.P. 3951
Douala, Cameroon
Tel: (237) 42-56-87
Fax: (237) 43-34-23

Synergie Saatchi & Saatchi Advertising
B.P. 390
Douala, Cameroon
Tel: (237) 42-26-40
Fax: (237) 42-94-83

COUNTRY INTERNET SERVICES

CyberBao Café Internet
1482, blvd de la Liberte, Akwa
B.P. 3951
Douala, Cameroon
Tel: (237) 42-29-20
Fax: (237) 42-29-19
<http://www.pdm-net.com/douala>

Cyber Café ICCnet
Hilton Hotel Arcade
B.P. 4124
Yaounde, Cameroon
Tel: (237) 22-15-88/9

Fax: (237) 22-15-90
<http://www.iccnet.cm>

Web Café Internet
Carrefour Air Afrique-Bonanjo
B.P. 17238
Douala, Cameroon
Tel: (237) 42-87-34
technopole@camnet.cm

COUNTRY COMMERCIAL BANKS

Amity Bank
20 rue Joss
B.P. 2705
Douala, Cameroon
Tel: (237) 43-20-55/43-20-49
Fax: (237) 43-20-46

Banque Internationale du Cameroun pour l'Epargne et le Credit
(BICEC):
195 av. du General de Gaulle
B.P. 4070
Douala, Cameroon
Tel: (237) 42-26-03/42-29-65
Fax: (237) 42-55-61

Caisse Commune d'Epargne et d'Investissement (CCEI):
Place de l'Hotel de Ville
B.P. 11834
Yaounde, Cameroon
Tel: (237) 22-58-37/23-63-27
Fax: (237) 22-17-85

Commercial Bank of Cameroon (CBC)
rue du General de Gaulle
B.P. 4004
Douala, Cameroon
Tel: (237) 42-02-02
Fax: (237) 43-38-02/43-38-00

Citibank, N.A.
P.O. Box 4571
Douala, Cameroon
Tel: (237) 42-42-72
Fax: (237) 42-40-74

Highland Corporation Bank, S.A.
Boulevard du 20 mai
B.P. 10039
Yaounde, Cameroon
Tel: (237) 23-92-87
Fax: (237) 23-92-91

Societe Commerciale de Banque-Credit Lyonnais (SCB-CL)
ave. Monseigneur Vogt
B.P. 700
Yaounde, Cameroon
Tel: (237) 23-40-05
Fax: (237) 22-41-32

Societe Generale de Banque au Cameroun (SGBC):
78, rue Joss
B.P. 4042
Douala, Cameroon
Tel: (237) 42-70-10/42-70-04
Fax: (237) 42-87-72/52-71-32

Standard Chartered Bank:
1143, blvd. de la Liberte
B.P. 1784
Douala, Cameroon
Tel: (237) 42-36-12/42-91-53
Fax: (237) 42-27-89

COUNTRY TELEGRAPHIC TRANSFER OF FUNDS FACILITIES

Societe Generale de Banque au Cameroun (SGBC), tel: (237) 42-70-04 Fax:(237) 42-87-72

Companie Financiere de l'Estuaire (COFINEST), tel: (237) 43-10-53 Fax: (237) 43-10-53

2. UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

TPCC (Trade Promotion Coordinating Committee) Information
Washington, DC
Tel: 1-800-USA-TRADE

U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20520
Office of the Coordinator for Business Affairs
Tel: 202-746-1625

Africa Bureau -AF/C
Mr. Henry Hand
Cameroon Desk Officer
Room 4246
Tel: (202) 647-1707
Fax: (202) 647-1746

U.S. Department of Commerce
14th and Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington D.C. 20230
Office of Africa
Doug Wallace
Cameroon Desk Officer
Room 2037
Tel: (202) 482-5149
Fax: (202) 482-5198

Foreign Commercial Service
Mr. John E. Brown
Regional Counselor for Commercial Affairs
U.S. Department of State-Abidjan
Washington, D.C. 20521-2010
Tel: (225) 21-09-79
Fax: (225) 22-32-59

U.S. Department of Agriculture
14th and Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, DC 20250-1000
Foreign Agricultural Service
Trade Assistance and Promotion Office
Tel: (202) 720-7420
Fax: (202) 690-4374

Mr. Frederick Kessel
Agricultural Attaché
USDA/Foreign Agricultural Service
American Embassy
Lagos, Nigeria
Tel/Fax: (234) (1) 61-39-26

Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC)
1100 New York Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20527-0001
Tel: (202) 336-8799
Fax: (202) 336-8700
Worldwide Web: <http://www.opic.gov>

CONTACTS WITHIN THE UNITED STATES:

Honorable Jérôme Mendouga
Ambassador
Embassy of the Republic of Cameroon
2349 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20008-4104
Tel: (202) 265-8790
Fax: (202) 387-3826

Honorary Consul of the Republic of Cameroon
Mr. Donald Low
147 Terra Vista
San Francisco, CA 94115
Tel: (415) 921-5372

Honorary Consul of the Republic of Cameroon

Mr. Charles R. Greene
2711 Wesleyan
Houston, TX, 77027
Tel: (713) 499-3502

The Corporate Council on Africa
1660 L Street, N.W., Suite 301
Washington, D.C. 20036
Tel: (202) 835-1115
Fax: (202) 835-1117

CHAPTER XII. MARKET RESEARCH

The American Embassy in Yaounde prepared the following market research-oriented in the first half of 2000. These reports, as well as more time-sensitive reports about Cameroonian government tenders and local trade opportunities, can be obtained through the U.S. Government website www.stat-usa.gov.

International Market Insight: Market for Packaging Products, January 2000.

International Market Insight: Business Services for Fee Offered by Embassy American Business Centers in Yaounde and Douala, January 2000.

Protection of IPR in Cameroon, March 2000.

Import Regulations for Used Medical Equipment, March 2000.

International Market Insight: Market for Computer and Telecommunications Equipment and Services, May 2000.

International Market Insight: Passenger Bus Market Prospects, May 2000.